DE CON=
TEMP
TV
MVNDI.

B. Paynell's

LONDINI IN AEDIBVS
THOMAE BERTHELETI.
M.D.XXXIII.

Ames p. 168.

237

Frances Giles

Samuell Gil

Dorothy Bar

nery

stale

¶ To the moste hyghe, most vertuous/and most excellent princesse/ the moste noble quene Mary dowager of France/ daughter and syster vnto the moste victorious kynges of Englande and of France/ your humble oratour Thomas Paynel prayeth good helth and prosperite.

IN tyme paste princesse most excellent/ relygyon was nat onely a thynge highlye estemed, but also hadde in right great honour and reuerence,, and nat dispised and littell sette by/ as it is now a dayes: but they that so do, eyther be suche as can nat be content to lyue straytely and hardely them selfe/ for so they repute a religious & a good lyfe, or els they be suche as be slyden

and fallen a fyde from the ryght beleue. But yet there is none be he neuer so delycately gyuen to pleasure/ or swarued so farre wyde from the true beleue/ that can so malyciously blame or barke agaynste relygyon: but that he shall fynde an hundred agayne/ that were nat onely vertuous and perfecte good men/ but also moste excellently lerned, the whiche do highly magnifie and preyse religion, ye and with longe eloquent orations and pistils they exhorte and stere the doulce delycate felowes of the worlde, that be ignorante, what a swete, what a quiete/ and what a holy lyfe is ledde in religion/to come thereynto. Than who is he that wold beleue one or two fráticke fooles, rather than a thousand of wise/ sadde, sobre/ prudente and perfecte good liuers? I haue thought many tymes what name shulde be moste conuenient for these foolishe and mad

felowes, that go about to dispreise relygyon (if they be worthy to haue any name at all). For true religion is the very way to saluatiō, & except religion, what proprete shal ye finde in mankynd/but that ye shal cōmonly find the same in beastis? Therfore they be very brute, & maye be well called beastes, that sette naught by religion, & vnreuerently dispreyse it. And what though some lewde persons/ledde by lust & riot, set naught by religion, yet it is neuer the worse/ nor there is none that is well disposed/& that hath any wisedom or vnderstandynge, that wyll beare euer the lesse loue and affection therynto, for any mans malignite. But yet to the intent that suche wycked and folyshe felowes shulde nat abasshe or afraye the corages and good myndes, that they beare vnto religion, the whiche as yet be but rude, and haue no groundly knowlege or vn-

derstandynge/ howe good and how requisite it is for mans soule helthe: sometyme the moste noble and excellent clerkes (as I sayde before) endyte erudite orations and eloquente exhortations, to open and declare the hygh goodnes of religion: as Erasmus hath done in this litell boke folowynge, the which boke translated by me in to englysshe, I was so bolde to dedicat to your grace princes most excellent, as to the very patrones & fauourer of holy religion. For all thoughe ye be a quene/ and haue alway kept a state of a princes most hygh/ shynynge in glory and ryches, and therto furnysshed with all moste honorable pleasures and delytes belongynge to nobilite, yet haue you bē alway most vertuous, deuout/ and charitable. The which great pietie and godly mynde enforced me to dedicate this smal boke to your grace: humbly desiring your

ex-

excellent maiestie to accepte this my rudenes: And I shall dayly pray: God encreace your grace / vertue, and honour. Amen.

¶ Erasmus Roterodamus vnto the reder sendeth gretynge.

Haue many times complayned most gentyl reder, that I was agreued with the loue & fauour of my frendes / the whiche (nat withstandynge that I am a lyue, and commaunde the contrarie) do vulgate and put forthe abrode suche trifils as I wrote whan I was yong to exercise my style, nat thinkynge that they shulde be spred abrode and common for euery man to haue: wherein I am so moche more vnhappy / that they be spred and come forthe in this most happy tyme and season, where if they had

come to lyghte whan they were firſt compyled and made, they ſhuld nat haue ben ſo moche ſubiecte to mens diſpreyſes and derisions. Now they be redde / as they were made of an aged manne, the whiche I compiled whan I was yonge, nat for that entent: that they ſhuld be redde in this tyme / whiche hath dyuers men of excellent lernynge and great vnderſtandynge. Whilom whan I was ſcantly .xx. yeres of age / at the deſyre and inſtance of a certayn man called Theodorike, the whiche yet lyueth, I wrote a pyſtell / by the whiche his intent was to cal his nephewe Joyce to the feloſhyp of his lyfe. To this piſtill often tymes copied and ſpred all about, they haue put my name / where as I haue no nephewe that is called Joyce. I wrote hit for an other mans entent and purpoſe. And as it ſelfe doth openly expreſſe, I wrote it negligently for my paſſe-

tyme

tyme, vsynge no studie nor exquisite argumentes: nor also to I was nat than enstructed in redynge of good auctours. And openlye they thretned to put hit in printe / excepte that I wolde cause it to be printed. So I redde it ouer, and whan I hadde changed a fewe wordes, I was content it shuld be printed. Thus I suppose it wyl come to passe at lengthe, that I shall forgo the loue that I haue to the folyshnesse and tryfils of my youth. Fare well good reder, and if thou rede it, rede it with forgyuenesse / and so rede it, as written for an other mans entente and purpose.

¶ Theodorike Harleme, to Joyce his most cunnynge nephew sendeth gretynge.

Certainly my moste verey and welbeloued Joice, I haue hadde of longe tyme / a right great desyre to write vnto the: but hytherto I haue kepte sylence, more for shamefastnesse than neglygence: for I drad leest whan I prepared my selfe / I that am nat moch elder than thou, but in other thingis far vnder the, to exhort the that art a man of singuler prudence and eruditiō, shuld be sene & reputed to take in hande / a labour that neded nat, as one wold cast water in to the see: nat for that I haue any doubt / that thou (which art so exceedyng good & gentil) woldest nat after the best maner accept myne exhortation, but leest

I shuld seme to take vpon me the of-
fice of an immodest or an vnshamfast
persone / to presume to gyue the ad-
monition / where it were more con-
uenyente that I shulde be exhorted
& monyshed of the. Therfore what
shall I do? Shall I wryte or no?
Shamefastnes forbyddethe me to
wryte: but than on the other syde,
the loue that I beare to the Joyce
wyll nat suffre it. Shall my mynde
thā be euermore in doute and waue-
rynge? Loue on the tone part coun-
sayleth me to wryte, & shamefastnes
on the other side mouethe me to the
contrary. And there is welnere no-
thyng more greuous or peynful than
a doutefull mynde. But at the last,
it that of ryghte ought to ouercome
shall haue place: Shamfastnes shal
obey vnto loue. For I shuld rather
esteme thy profyte, yea thy soule
helth / than what men wyll saye by
me. If that this myn enterprise shal
be

be more applyed to pride than wisedome, truly myne offence shulde so moche the sooner be forgynen, in as moche as it procedeth of loue. For vndouted, I had leuer wrytynge louyngly, do boldely / than wisely kepynge sylence, to do more wysely. Nor I doubte nat / but by this patron and aduocat (I mene our loue) I shall be absolued and quited. For our loue is nat symple or of the common sorte, but very entier, trusty and sure. The causes of our twos frendshyp be ryght great and many folde: our bryngynge vp togyther of chyldren / the maruaylous agrement of our two myndes / one maner of study in moste noble scyences / the innumerable plesures that thou hast done for me, the singular beneuolence and speciall good minde of the / of thyn borne alway towarde me. And also to these causes / is ioyned alyaunce of blode. What thyng

can

can be more gluynge or claſpyng tha this our frendeſhyp? the whiche as hit were with a double cheyne, is bounde and knytte faſt together, on the one ſyde with kinred, and on the other ſyde with fyxed charite or entycrly louynge myndes. Therfore Joyce J wolde thou ſhuldeſt thinke and ſurely truſt, that neuer man loued hym ſelfe more hartely than J loue the. And ſeynge that J loue the as moche as my ſelfe or more, J muſte nedes care as moche for thy ſoule helthe as for myn owne. yea and trewe loue conſtraynethe vs (J wotte nat by what meane) to ſorowe more greuouſely oure frendes incommodytie and hurte thanne oure owne / and more to deſyre oure frendes welfare thanne oure owne. And brefely to ſpeake, trewe loue cauſeth one manne to loue an other more tenderly thanne hym ſelfe. Whiche thynge in the J

nede

nede nat to mistruste, but on my part I may surely affyrme it. This thing hath so moch enbolded and encoraged me, that I layde shamefastnes apparte for the tyme and wrote vnto the this letter of exhortatiō, by the whiche my mynde is to withdrawe the from the hurly burly & busynes of the world, and bryng the to a lyfe monastycke, that is to say, solytary and quyet. This is no small thyng, nor a thynge that may soone be perswaded to the common people: but bycause thy lyfe is of suche perfytnes all redy, that excepte the habite or clothynge of a laye man (wherof I am very glad) the world welnere can challenge no properte in the. I fullye trust that this myne exhortation shall take effect, seyng that both the corage of thy passing good mind and my oration leade the to the same thynge. Who wolde doubte that shyp to sayle plesantly, that hathe

bothe

bothe wynde and wether at wyll? And all be it that thy good and commendable lyfe stereth me to hope well, yet shal I neuer be out of feare and drede vntyll such time that thou clene forsake this vnhappy and britell worlde: and entre in to some Monastery, as in to an hauen moost sure. For truste me, as often as I reuolue and consydre in my mynde the perils and dangers, amonge the which thou arte conuersante (wher vpon I thynke welnere alwaye) so ofte the tender loue that I beare to the warde, maketh me very heuy and sorowful. For I am none other wyse affectioned or minded toward the, than a good kynde mother is to her onely and moste dere chylde, the which is on the see saylinge by some daungerous place, where as shippes often tymes go to wracke and perysshe, which whan she seeth or hereth the vyolente hurle wynde ryse rug-

ruggedly aloste, she wayleth, she waxeth pale, & trembleth for drede: In her slepe her mynde ronneth/and she dreameth of her sonne: and euer she dredeth the worst/ and more thā is true or nede to be feared. But wolde to god that I neded nat to drede lesse perylles than be. But I knowe, I knowe good Joice/ what troubles be in the see of this world/ in what danger the life standeth, and what dyuers kyndes of deth there be: out of the which but late swimmynge naked on a lytell borde/ vneth I escaped. But perauenture thou beynge in a solysshe sureté of thy selfe, and callynge me tymerous or fearful, wilt byd me to be careles: but yet if thou so do/ thou canst nat dryue feare oute of my mynde: for thou art so farre wyde to drawe me from drede, that thou almost bryngest all my hope to naught. Trewely thou arte so moche the more in the

danger

danger of perile, in how moch lesse that thou perceiuest them: or if thou doest vnderstand and perceiue them, and wylte nat beware and eschewe them/what thynge can be more mischiefull or more madde than suche a confydence? I pray the tell me/who is more folysshe than that shypman, the whiche amonge the spumynge or fomynge rockes/the furious syrtes, the ragynge goulfes of the see, in a great and hydeous tempest, and therto his shyppe feble and weke/ dothe feare no maner perill/but lyenge vpryght by the helme, he syngeth, yea, & forbyddeth those that sayle with him vnder his tuition, to be afrayde or carefull? What man wyll nat abhorre the foly and madnes of suche a felowe/and drede to scape safely? Nor I good Joyce/ shall neuer be rydde of care so longe as thou foolehardly doest saile forth in this mooste vnquyete see of the

worlde. Thou wylte peraventure saye/this is a foolysshe comparison: Howe doth the worlde and the see agree, seynge that nothyng is more blandissshynge or faunynge than the worlde, and nothynge is more horrible than the see? yea but I know no feter comparison/if thou consydre it well. Thynkest thou that the yll melodye & swete honygall tunes of the Syrens/the which bryng the passagers forby fyrste in a slombre, & after drowne them: doth nat well expresse the shrewde blandissshynge/ and lewde delites of this worlde? Wolde to god thou coudest se what snares, what disceites/& what nets, they lay priuily to attrapt thy youth with. Loke therfore that thou flye from the bankes or see costes, where these Syrens be. For flyghte in this behalfe is the surest way. Nor thou shuldest nat foolehardely truste to sayle sure and safely that way/wher

as thou seest kynge Dauyd, Salomon, and many other / and nobler than are to be spoken of here / wente to wracke. And brefely to speke: no man scaped, but he that fledde. Homer reherseth, that Vlixes, the whiche representeth the person of a perfecte wyse manne / with great study and diligence coude scarsly scape the swete honygalle songe of these Syrens / and yet he stopped his eares with waxe, and bounde hym selfe to the shyppe maste. Than what hope haste thou to escape them? Seynge that so many haue conspyred togyther to distroy the, as waton youth, enticynge beautifulnes / ryches, lycence, libertie, the dayly and nyghtlye direes of these (Delas) to swete mõsters. Nor I thinke nat, but that these hie apperyng sharpe rockes, I meane the hyghnesse of secular dignytees, are as moch to be dredde of the: amonge the whiche if thou be

Vlix

dryuen by any coole of wynde, thou ſhalte thynke it gothe with the ryghte well / if ſwymmynge on a ſmall bourde / the ſtorme caſt the on lande in ſome vnknowen place. What thynkeſt thou by the vnſacyable deuowrynge Larybdes? The which, as good authours reherſe / whanne a ſhyppe ſwyftly ſaylyng cometh within the daunger therof, is wont to reſyſt / and oftentymes to whyrle it aboute / and ſwalowe in the ſame ſhyppe. Is this an vnlikely fygure and compariſon vnto couetouſnes? The whiche tourneth a mans mynde to vnſaciable deſyre, and wyll nat ſuffer hym in quyete / vntyll it hath drowned him in helle. And by the furious Syrtes thou maiſte vnderſtande the inſuperable mocion of anger, and the more the ſame offence is, the more copyous or abundaunt the matter therof is. Do nat the wyndes playnely expreſſe as

well

wel the pestilent wordes of flaterers as of detractours & backbyters? And though it forceth nat from whens these wyndes blowe, yet they are euer to be feared. For if thou be driuen amonge the craggy rough rockes, wether it be by wyndes of prosperite or aduersite, yet neuer the lesse thou shalte be dryuen vpon Syrtes. And what supposest thou by the terrible alterations and surgynges of the wawes, sometyme rysynge vp as hyghe as the sterres, and anone fallynge downe in to them selfe agayne? Howe conueniently do they sygnify the mutabilite and varyablenesse of fortune, wherwith a broken mynde is for the more part brought out of paciẽce? for he that was now ryche and in hygh prosperite, canne nat beare paciently sodeyne calamyte. I ouer passe here the tempestes and stormes, I speke nat of the nightes errours, nor of the deceyuable

planettes: Nor I reherse nat the manyfolde, and dyuers kyndes of monsters/ the which are bredde and norysshed in the see, these thou shalt by thyne owne wysedome call vnto thy minde/and more better interpretate what they meane. Nor thou shuldest nat trust the see, whan it semeth smothe and caulme, nor whan the clere glassy stormes be swaged and layd/nor whan the ayre is faire and clere: for all this is done to the ende that the sodayn tempest myght synde the vnprouyded and a slepe. And therfore I doubt greatly/whether there be any thynge more contrary/more hurtfull/or more foo vnto vertue than prosperitie. For as scrypture dothe wytnes, Calamite and misfortune breketh many a one: but good fortune and prosperite dissolueth or mollyfyeth many mo. Therfore be thou wyse & wel ware, and truste nat the smylynge worlde:

Iceſt

leeſt whan thy ſhyppe is ronne to wracke and broken (which god forbyd) I ſhuld be fayne to lamente the with theſe verſes of the poet.

O Palynure, O gouernour and cheſe guyde
Of Aeneas ſhyp, wherin that prince dyd ſayle
For all thy great cunning, thou condeſt nat preuyd
The danger of the ſee, that the dyd affayle
The taſtynge of thy compas dyd lytell preuayle
Truſtynge to moche cawlme wedder and fayre ſkie
Upon the ſee ſander, deed naked whan thou lyes.

Of the dangerous dwellynge in the worlde. The ſeconde Chapiter.

SEeſt thou nat moſt gentyll Joyce what greate perils enuiron and compas the about on euery ſide? To whome the very tranquillytie or quyete it ſelfe is dangerous? What troweſt thou ſo to ouer come and withſtande theſe peryls, that thou ſhalte on no parte take hurte

or haue myshappe / namely in thy youthe / whiche of his owne brayde without any other entycement doth enclyne to synne and yll disposition? But thou wylte saye thus. I hope to do well. Thou mayste hope and trust wel / and I also hope well: but I feare me leest we bothe shall hope in vayne. Therfore I wolde thou shuldest make this oure hope to be somewhat more surer. But I lyghly coniecte / what thou wylte thinke and mutter, whan thou redest these my wordes. Be these thynges in so great sauetye? Shall religious men onely be saued and all other perissh? No forsothe. For I deny nat / but there haue ben many liuynge in this world, that be saued. Nor they that entre in to a monasterye of religion, do nat forth with settil them selfe so / that they may safely liue clene without care. But yet natwithstandyng, there is as great dyfference betwene

these

these two maner of lyuynges / as is betwene hym that lieth at rode in the hauen, though he hath nat yet bowed his ankers: and hym that yet sayleth aloft in the mayne see. Or elles betwene hym that swymmeth in the water / and hym that iourneth by lande. He perissheth nat, that remaineth in the worlde, but he is more nere vnto peril. Therfore good Ioice, seynge that I wold the so moche good / ye and peraventure desyre more thy welfare thanne thou doest thy selfe / loke that thou eschewe all perils, and put thy selfe in sauegarde. For the wyse manne saith: He that loueth peril / shall peryssche therin. I pray the / what nede haste thou to be tossed with the ragynge wawes of water, whan thy way lyeth more sure and commodiously by lande? Who (but he that is starke blynde) seeth nat / that it is farre more surer, more plesaunt, and

more surer / more plesaunt, & more commodius to iourney through the plesaunte grene medowes without drede, than among so many images of deth to be turned and went with perpetuall vexation and trouble? Is nat this a great blyndenes / that we delyte in our aduersite / and as Vyrgyll saythe, to take pleasure to gyue our selfe to soolyshe and madde labour?

¶ What sporte, what pleasure, or whatsolatious rest
Is in these worldly wawes, to be tossed and cast
wherfore aproch the hyther, & thou shalt fynde it best
For here is the fresshe tyme of Vere that doth last
here be christallyn ryuers enuyron compast
The soyle & grounde, enbroudred with swete floures
here groweth the pople tre, to shadow vs frō shoures

within these dennes delectable, of fresh pipling colde
Vnder these vynes here, enclustred with grapes
Ther be souerain shadowes, frō stormes vs to whold
Draw hither, & renounce these worldly trifling iapes
And let the wylde wawes worke, that betes & grates

Vpon

Upon the rough rockes, of worldly pompe and pride
Here be fresshe fountaynes, that spryng on euery side

Here be the swete medowes & grasse enuerdred grene
Orchyardes and greanes, with trees of dyuers frute
with herbers to rest in, and alleys kept clene
Lyke to Paradyse of pleasure to take our refute
Of solace incomparable, this place I repute
here myght I fynde in myne hert with the to endure
from al worldly daunger, for here ar we sure.

IT hath pleased me with this Vyrgyls ditee to allure the awaye from worldly troubles to oure delectable lyfe. But I wotte nat with what iougglynges the lewde smylynge shewe of this worlde hathe bewytched the eyes of thy mynde, & staieth & sticketh fast to thy minde, as thoughe it were glewed. And forth with the same fayre paynted face of worldly thynges cometh to thy remembraunce, and with smylyng calleth the backe againe, whan thou art about to leue, them sayeng: what

What wylte thou do madde man? Doest thou about to distroy bothe thy selfe and thyn? O cruell person, wylt thou forsake vs after this maner? Wylt thou dispise thy louynge felowes and frendes? Hast thou no pitie on thy father and mother? In what case thinkest thou that she shal be, the whiche hartely loueth the, and that for thy loue distroyeth her selfe & that desireth the to her spouse & husbande? Aduise the well what thou wylte do. For this thy tendre youth and beautie are more conuenient for other thynges. And thou art so softe and delicat of Nature to take on the and perfourme an harde religion. Ah wylte thou suffre the flower of thy youth so vnworthely to fade away? Wylt thou solitary alone styll waylynge spende awaye thy lusty youth? Thou shuldest leue that to them that be aged / vnto whome nowe the lyfe is no longer swete.

swete. Thou art a yong man, what thyng els shuldest thou do but spoꝛt and playe? At leest wyse considre, what abundance of rychesse thou haste all redye, and moche moꝛe is comynge, if thou wylt tary and abyde it. Thou arte nowe ryght honoꝛable, and yet thou shalt be higher in honour, if thou slynke nat awaye from vs. These be the thynges that all men seke foꝛ: and thou alone foꝛsakest them: whan they be all redy sought out and gotte to thy hande. But wylt thou go thy way, and neuer returne agayne to take fruition of these ioyes, rychesse, commodites, and profites? yet at the leest I praye the tary a while, take a breth in the matter: foꝛ hastynes is cause of moche hurt and inconuenience. Daste thou harde these exhoꝛtations? Dast thou harde them? These be the very voyces of the Syrens: but as thou loueste thy helthe, loke

that

that thou lysten noꝛ gyue none herynge to them. Shewe thy ſelfe to be Vlyxes: They wyl bewitche thy minde, if thou harken to them: They be ſuche faire flaterars, that they wyll moue and perſwade ſtony hertes: But thou oughteſt to remẽbꝛe, that they be deed voices, and leade one to euerlaſtinge damnation. But hither, to religion, thou ſhuldeſt harkẽ, hither thou ſhuldeſt loke, hyther thou ſhuldeſte enclyne thy mynd: endeuoyꝛe thy ſelfe with all thy myght, imploy hereon ſharpely thy wytte, deſceyue nat thy ſelfe, loke to the bottum of the matter, & thou ſhalte ſe, if thou be nat blind, howe ſtynkyng, howe fruſtrate oꝛ voyde, ye and vnwoꝛthye foꝛ the theſe thinges be, that wyll nat ſuffer the to leaue them.

The

¶ The dispysynge and contempnyng of ryches. The thyrde chaptre.

Vvhat thynge of so greatte a valure dothe this worlde promyse to the / that for the loue therof thou wilt put thy soule helth in aduenture, & absente thy self from our delectations? What I say doth hit promyse the? Is it abundaunce of riches? For that is it that mortall folkes most specially desyre: But for ⁊ truth there is nothyng more miserable, more vayne or dysceyuable, more noyous or hurtful thā worldly goodes. The worldely goodes are the verye maysters ⁊ ministers of all misgouernance and myscheefe. For holy scriptu re dothe nat with out a cause call couetousnes the rote of all yuell. For therof spryngethe an vngratyous affection vnto goodes / ther

that thou lysten nor gyue none herynge to them. Shewe thy selfe to be Vlyxes: They wyl bewitche thy minde, if thou harken to them: They be suche faire flaterars, that they wyll moue and perswade stony hertes: But thou oughtest to remẽbre, that they be deed voices, and leade one to euerlastinge damnation. But hither, to religion, thou shuldest harkẽ, hither thou shuldest loke, hyther thou shuldeste enclyne thy mynd: endeuoyre thy selfe with all thy myght, imploy hereon sharpely thy wytte, deceyue nat thy selfe, loke to the bottum of the matter, & thou shalte se, if thou be nat blind, howe stynkyng, howe frustrate or voyde, ye and vnworthye for the these thinges be, that wyll nat suffer the to leaue them.

The

¶ The dispysynge and contempnyng of ryches.

The thyrde chaptre.

Vvhat thynge of so greatte a valure dothe this worlde promyse to the / that for the loue therof thou wilt put thy soule helth in aduenture, & absente thy self from our delectations? What I say doth hit promyse the? Is it abundaunce of riches? For that is it that mortall folkes most specially desyre: But for a truth there is nothyng more miserable, more vayne or dysceyuable, more noyous or hurtful thā worldly goodes. The worldely goodes are the verye maysters & ministers of all misgouernance and myschefe. For holy scriptu re dothe nat with out a cause call couetousnes the rote of all yuell. For therof spryngethe an vngratyous affection vnto goodes / ther

therof iniurics or wrōges haue their begynnyng: therof groweth cedicion or parte takynge / therof cometh stealynge pyllynge / sacrylege / extorcyon, and robbynge. Rychesse engendre and brynge forth inceste and aduoutry, Rychesse nourisheth and fostreth vp rauyshementes / madde loues / and superfluite. And finally what is it / that the cursed hunger & desire of golde doth nat constraine mortal folkes to do? Therfore thou mayste perceyue / that Horace was wyse / whiche callynge rychesse the matter and rote of all yuelles / commaunded to cast them in to the see: and sayde: If it be a wycked dede, it repenteth me well. For there is so great familyar societe and frendeshyppe of thynges / that in the very names of vyce and rychesse, Vitia et diuitie, semethe to be a certeyne alyaunce and kinrede. What rych man canst thou reken vnto me, that is nat

infected

infected with one of these two vices either with couetousnes (than whiche nothing is more to be abhorred) if Nature to the same be ouer moch enclyned: or els with prodygalyte and wast, than whiche nothynge is more abhominable / if he that is inclined therynto be of benigne and gentyll nature? The couetous man is seruaunt and nat mayster vnto riches: and the waster wyll nat longe be mayster therof. The one is possessed, and doth nat possesse: and the other within a shorte whyle leueth the possession of riches. We semeth that the man called Eutrapelus / vnderstode those thinges very goodly, the whiche as I haue lerned, was wont to reuenge hym on his enemy after this maner & forme: nat with iniurious wordes / nor with poyson / nor with the sworde: but he wold enryche his foe with precyous garmentes: for he supposed it / the whi-

che is of trouth/ that shuld prouoke hym to desyre it, and the hungry desyre of ryches shulde cause hym to forgette vertue/ and dryue hym to all fylthynes and disworship. But admit that none of all these thynges shal chaunce vnto the, and that thou shuldst haue suche happe as no man coude haue: yet I pray the what goodlynesse haue the same precyous weightes: the whiche be gethered and gotte by great grefe/ and kepte with ouer great thought and care: In heapynge them to gether is labour intollerabull/ and in kepynge them is ouer moche care and drede: and the forgoyng or losse of them is a miserable veration and turment. Therfore a ryche man hath no sportynge tyme: for either without reste or slepe he watchethe his goodes, that he hath gotte, or els he gapeth to gette more, or elles he forroweth for his losses: And as ofte as he

dothe

dothe no thynge gayne / ſo ofte he
weneth that he dothe loſe and hath
damage. And what if he haue and
poſſeſſe mountaynes of golde? Or
what and his ryches be greatter
than mountaynes of golde? Than ſo
moche the more he augmentethe his
fardel and burden / and heapeth vp
his cares: and throweth or tumbleth
feare vppon feare / and grefe vppon
grefe, and prouydethe for hym ſelfe
a charge or a buſynes of a keper,
full of all myſerye and labourc. Care
doth folowethe encreaſynge of mo
ney. And the deſyre of the money
groweth as the money dothe en-
creaſe. And the poorer that a man
is / the leſſe he coueteth money. And
fynally the very cuſtody of greatte
goodes or ſubſtaunce / is a miſerable
or a wretched thynge. The man cal
led Vulcelus (of whome Horace ſpe
keth) ſayde, that his aduocate or
attourney hadde done yll for hym /

whan by his wyt and diligence / he
cauſed hym fro pouertie to come to
great riches: & he thought him ſelfe
to be made a wretche and nat a rich
man: and he prayed his attourney /
that he might be reſtored to his for-
mer lyfe or ſtate, the which was po-
uerte. Truly he is to be preiſed / that
waxeth wiſe er it be to late. But the
couetous man ſayth: Though the
care of theſe ryches be greuous and
peynfull / money is ſwete: My la-
bour and peyne dothe nat wery nor
greue me, ſo that my ryches do en-
crece. But tell me whether ſhall I
call the, the moſte foole or the moſte
wretch of all men? To whome no-
thyng can ſuffyſe / which both night
and daye ſytteſt watchynge on thy
ryches / eyther hydde and locked vp
in thy yron cheſtes, or els (to the end
thou woldeſt ſeme to be more wiſe)
doluen in the erthe: lyke as the ſer-
pent Heſperius watcheth the golde
apples

apples. For what purpose thynkest thou these rychesse and money shuld be profitable? Or what preciousnes is in them? For of trouth they be nothynge elles but very pure brasse striken in images and scriptures: the whiche can neyther expell or put away the cares & greses that gnawe the about the stomake, nor they can nat auoyde or rydde the of syckenes or any incommodyte of thy body, and moche lesse of dethe. But thou wylt saye, that rychesse be good to withstand nede and pouerte. I promesse the thou arte disceyued, they wil rather cause the to be euer nedy. For lyke as drynke doth nat quench his thyrste that hath the dropsye, but maketh hym more thyrstye: so lyke wyse with the abundaunce of goodes or riches, thy desyre to haue more dothe encreace: And who so euer seketh after more, sheweth himselfe to be nedye.

Now adde vnto the truſt that thou haſt in thy goodes, the inſtabilite or vnaſſuredneſſe of them / the whiche thou by ſo longe ſpace of time / with ſo great moleſtfoulnes and labour / by right and wronge / haſt gathered to gether all about: if that fortune (as men ſaye) tourne her whele, by and by they forſake & leaue the / and go to ſome other. And than thou / that waſt euen nowe richer thā Cre ſus / that moſte riche kinge / ſhalt ſo-daynly come more powrer than the begger Jrus. This thinge is ſo clere and manifeſte, that we nede not to ſpēde many wordes therin. Nowe many mayſt thou ſe before thin eien that fall from a kingis riches to ex-treme poucrte & nedines? But ad-mitte that goodes or ryches be ſure and ſtable, and that they wyl neuer leue the ſo longe as thou lyueſt, canſt thou carye them hence away with the? yea whan thou goeſt to thy graue /

graue, of all thy abundance and ry-
cheſſe, thou ſhalte ſcarſely haue a
cours wyndynge ſhete: other men
ſhall poſſeſſe all the reſidue. And yf
thou with thy abundãt ryches haſt
done any good vertuous dedis, they
ſhall greatly auayle, and be moche
worthe vnto the, nor they wyll ne-
uer leaue the. Therfore my ſwete
Joyce, thou ſhuldeſte not eſteme ſo
highly thy poſſeſſions, & all the gold
that the ryuers Tagus & Pactolus
reuerſe & tourne in theyr red ſandis,
that thou ſhuldeſt hurte or hyndre
thin owne helth: But thou ſhuldeſt
rather, if it delyteth the ſo greatly,
to be ryche, harken what counſaile
our lorde giueth the: Make thou thy
treaſorie in heuen, where nother cã-
ker nor mouth can diſtroye it, and
where theuis can not find nor ſteale
it. Nor thinke not, that there is any
plentie more nedy, thã to haue abun
dance of money, and want vertues.

Nor no thynge is more vnwelthy, than that luker or wynnynge, that hurteth thy soule. Therfore vnto the, that arte bothe erudite and a christen man/it is a foule and a sham full thinge, with great perill of thy soule helthe, to inclyne to that, the whiche the pagane philosophers either for the loue of good lerninge/or for their good name and fame/didde set at nought and lightly despise.

¶That the pleasures of the flesshe be bothe mortall and bitter.

The.iiii.Chaptre.

Do the swete lustes or entycementes of the flesshe withholde or reteyne the? Surely they be ladyes that most swetely smile on the, and that with theyr fucate or feyned fayrnes disceyue all moost the hole worlde. But take or rubbe awaye the paintynge and colours/and beware

ware that the craftily payuted faire
skynne ouercome the nat. Beholde
and loke well what these lewde lu-
stes be in dede, and nat what they
seme to be. Than shalt thou perceiue
that there is nothing more yl fauou-
red, nothinge more fouller, nor more
beastlike. For there is nothyng that
maketh a mā more lyke vnto a brute
beest, than the moste fylthy luste of
the flesshe dothe: whiche thinge the
more it smyleth and fauneth on one,
the more hit noyeth and hurteth.
Lyke as the noble philosopher Pla-
to moste aptly calleth it the bayte of
al yuels. For as the baite that is put
vpō the hoke prouoketh or draweth
the small fysshe thervnto, and taketh
them that receiue it: euē so like wise
the poyson of carnall luste, couered
with a lyttell quantite of hony, doth
prouoke or allure soules, that be de-
sirous of a pray: and whan they be
entyced, she infectethe them: and

whan they be corrupted, she distroi-
ethe them without mercy. And
breefely to speake take hede what
the philosopher sayth, surely it is a
paynyms sayenge, but it is worthy
and may well be sayde of a christen
man: the whiche sentence the elder
Cato saith in Ciceros boke de Senec
tute, that he lerned at Tarent of Py-
thagoras scholer called Archita, he
saith: There is no greatter nor more
deedly pestilence gyuen of Nature
vnto mankind than voluptuousnes,
of the whiche voluptie the feruente
lustes are prouely & vnbrideldly kend
led to fulfyll the desyre therof. Of
this roote spryngeth treason and be
trayeng of countreys: of this riseth
turnynge vp set downe of the com-
mon welth: the same thynge causeth
priuy communications with our en-
nemyes. And fynallye there is no
myschefe, nor none so vengeable a
dede, but that the lewde lust of vo-
lupte

lupte dothe constrayne one to enter-
pryse or goo in hande therewith.
Adde also these commodites folo-
wynge to them afore sayde: Of vo-
luptuousnes commeth indigence or
nedines, ifamy or yll name, greuous
& filthy diseases of the bodye, blynd-
nes of the mind, despising of diuine
power, & it is the very fountain and
beginninge of all my serye: ye and fy-
nally hit is the very cheyne, wher-
with mankynde is drawen to euer-
lastynge peynes. O lower swetenes,
the whiche enuyronned or set about
with so manyfolde miseryes: many
go before it, and very many go with
it, and many many yea mooste sharp
greuous miseries come or folow af-
ter it. I sayd a litel before, that man-
kynde in volupte was lyke vnto
brute beastis: but I say nowe, that
in this thynge we do behaue oure
selfe worse than beastes. For bea-
stes take fruycyon of theyr pleasures
(suche

(ſuche as they be) franke and frely without any expence, But O good lorde / howe coſtely to mankinde is that ſhorte and foule ſmacke of the delicate throote and bealy. Thou ſeeſt what thinge it is / the which amonge bodily pleaſures is moſte excellent / if any kynde of voluptie may be called excellente.

Wherto ſhuld I nowe reherce vnto the / the other triſelinge iapes, or rather madneſſes of the worlde? Some call them yll ioyes: but me thinkith I ſhuld not miſname them / if I called them madde gaudes. Wherto ſhuld I reherce the deyntie diſhes, the ingurgynges, the dryn-kynge and quaftyng one to an other / the nightly dronkennes, the banket-tinges, the daũces / the gambauldes, the diſſolut plaies, the knanyſhe and rebaude ieſtinges, and of the ſame ſorte a thouſande thinges mo: Do not theſe thynges ſeme to the, lyke

the

the laughinges of a franticke man? For who wold nat iudge that man to be cleane beſydes hym ſelfe and madde, the whiche whan he is led to be hanged or heedēd, trembleth nothinge for drede of the inſtante execucion, but amonge all the other/ that ſorowe and bewayle his misfortune, he is ioyfull and gladde/ye and gothe towarde the place where he ſhall ende his lyfe daunſinge and merily ſcoffynge and ieſtynge? But thoſe Joice/of whome J ſpake now before, J iudge to be more madder than this felowe, in as moch as the dethe of the ſoule is more greuous and more cruell than of the body. They paſſe forthe theyr life dayes in gaudes and ſportes/and ſodaynely they go to helle. Go to nowe/forſake and fal from thy maker, to the ende that thy beeſtlye and mortall fleſſhe may an houre or two folowe the luſte therof, and lyue damnably,

and

and to the ende that thy flesshe may haue and enioy vnstedfaste ioyes / sle and mourther thy soule, and prepare for thy selfe euerlastyng peines and waylynges. But parauenture thou louest the venerial acte, that is lawefull and doest surely purpose to be maried. For a trouthe I do nat condemne wedlocke, for I mynde hym that sayth, It is better to marye than to commytte fornication / but I wold this shuld be as it were a place of refuge for vnconstante folkes that can nat lyue chaste. I haue no spyte at them that fled the great towne of Segor, and also the lytell / to eschewe the fyer of Sodomites. I know & perceiue well the strength of thy mynde. I allowe wedlocke, but that is in them that can nat liue well / except they be maryed. But loke thou and consydre well what saynt Dieronyme hath wrytten of these maters: truly he hath written very

verye moche therof. But this one thynge I wyll saye vnto the, for the gret familiarite that hath alway bē betwene vs. I admonysshe, ye and hartly pray the to take hede and beware how thou putteſt thy necke in this halter: in to the whiche if thou be ones entred, thou cāſt nat lightly get out again. I do nat say that wedlocke is naught but for a trouth it is ful of moch misery. And as single life is moch better, ſo many and dyuers wayes hit is more vnwelthy.

¶ That the honours of this world be vayne or fooly ſshe and vnſtable. The. v. Chap.

BVt parauenture the honorable preſcriptions or titils of nobleneſs, and the ſplendente glory of renowme delyten thy mynde. Why ſhuld it nat? For as he sayth, it is a goodly thynge to be honorablye renowmed

nowmed farre and wyde / and to reioyce and be gladde that a thousande eies beholde the whan thou speakeſt. It is a pleaſaunt thinge to the / to be honorably ſought vpon, and to haue many clietis or ſutours to folowe after and go aboute the, and to be ſpoken of, of euery man / and to be ſaluted and grieted as a great lorde or a maiſter. But I pray the tell me, what thynge doeſt thou ſuppoſe that theſe honours be / the whiche vnto the, beynge a mortall creature, mortall folkes gyue, ſome for flaterie / ſome for feare, and ſome in hope to winne therby? The whiche worldly honors be as clene falſe as they be caduke and vaniſhynge. Be they not falſe or vntruſtie, thinkeſt thou / the whiche indifferently chaunce as well vnto hym, that is moſte worſte / as vnto hym, that is moſte beſte? Judge and deme thoſe only to be good and very honours /

the

the whiche flowe or growe oute of honestye and vertue. Loke that thou embrace and stycke vnto vertu, and thou shalte be honorable whether thou wylte or no. For as the shadow foloweth styll after the body, and wyll nat leaue it though he flye, nor can nat be taken of one that recheth for it: so these actes & dedes that be done rightfully / shall without any seekynge of the, bryng the to honors, the whiche thou beynge worthy to haue, canst nat auoyde: and thou beinge vnworthy canst nat optayne them. Is there any thynge more slippry or caduke than worldly honours? Truely me thynke that all worldly thinges vanishe away lightly and tary but a while. For what thynge canst thou name here that is continuallye durable? And agayne nothynge is more vncertayne and flitting than great & highe dignites: and seynge that nothyng is got and

opteyned with more greſe than dignites, for one muſt a long ſeaſon tomble the ſtone with Siſipho agaynſte the craggy mountayne, and boldely do ſome thynge that is worthy of banyſſhynge / pryſonement / or elles hangynge, that at the laſt he may be ſome what worthy, and ſome what exalted: Therfore I ſay as nothyng is got more greuouſly / ſo nothyng is ſoner loſt. Thou aſkeſt me why ſo. Mary bicauſe that of neceſſite great hatred or ſpyte foloweth hygh dignite, pryuy enuy clymbeth vp to the hygheſt in degree: and the wyndes ouerblowe the hygh toppes of trees and towres. For enuy is wonte alwaye to accompany the noble and hygh enterpriſes. Thou wylte ſaye what than? Marye he that hathe gottē the hatred of many men / muſt nedes of very conſequence haue many ennemies, and be ofte in daunger of his lyfe. Why ſo? Mary for whā

many

many go about to haue that thynge, the whiche thou alone doſt poſſeſſe & holde / and all the whyle thou doeſt proſpere / there is no hope to opteine it / hit muſte nedes be, that by ſome mene they wyll rydde the out of the way. Jt were a thynge of great difficulte, if that he / for whom ſo many ſnares be layde, ſhuld nat at the laſt fal in to one or other of them. Therfore eyther thou muſt dye of poiſon / or els on a dagger / or els (whiche for the ſhulde be beſt of all) thou muſte ſaue thy ſelfe by exile. Or els to the ende that thou mighteſt be moſt fortunate, thou wylt lyue in perpetuall anxiete and feare, that thou be nat ſuppreſſed and caſte downe. No doute thou ſhalt leade an noble lyfe / but hit ſhall be very bytter & ſower. Therfore thynke nat the contrary / but that Juuenall ſpake nat this ditee that foloweth / without great ſkele.

¶ For truly the trouth groundly to eyppche
who coueteth excessyue honours to attayne
And gaddreth to gedder excedyngly ryches
Buildynge vp towres vpon towres agayn
Suche clymmynge vp vnwarely, maye
for a tyme remayne.
Yet the hygher thou climmest, the sorer
is thy fall.
So sayth the satirian mayster Iuuenall.

¶ But to what entente do I with so many wordes reherse those thinges? Trewely to the ende that thou my Joyce shuldest vnderstand plainlye / howe full of feare and drede / how full of vexation and trouble / and howe caduke and brittle those thinges be / the which this worlde / al the while thou art in prosperite / sheweth to be of great and hyghe excellence. What auayleth all this, whan most bitter deth fiersly assayleth & enuadeth vs? Whan sodainly all the same ymages of nobylyte, the whiche after the maner of dreames vanysshe awaye: whiche dreames

mes togyther with the ſlepe ar gone and tary no longer. Where ben now the olde tyrauntes become? Where is the great Alexandre, whoſe couetous mynde, all the brode worlde coude nat ſomtyme ſuffyſe? Where is the Perſyan kynge Xerxes, with and of whoſe houge Nauye of ſhyppes/all the ſee was couered and redounded? Where is become Hanyball that was ſo ofte victorious: the whiche whan he lyued: breake the rough rockes and mountaynes with vinegre? Where is now Paulus Aemilius? Where is Julius Ceſar? Where is Pompeius? Where ar become all the other mooſt noble princis: of the Grekes/of the Romayns/& of other natyons/whoſe names to reherſe, ſhuld be both tedious & tyme loſt: What thing els remayneth of all theyr maieſty & glorious actes/but onely the vaine & fruſtrate talking of folkes? ye, & for the

whiche talkynge, they may thanke the fauoure of lerned men: for if lerned men had nat wrytten theyr dedes / they shulde haue ben so clene forgotten / that vnnethe any remembraunce of them wolde haue remaynced. And yet what so euer it be that remaynethe, perteyneth neyther to them nor to vs. For vndouted / if that Alexandre the mooste noblest of all the kynges that we haue nowe rehersed / shulde returne from Hell / and beholde the worlde and se how it burneth in ambitious desyre of worldly honours / I thynke verily he wolde laugh & deryde the vayne and folysshe study or feruent industry of the common people, and he hauynge good experyence in those matters, wolde say these wordes or suche lyke, as foloweth. Whither dothe the blynde erroure of mortall creatures so violently drawe & leade them? No man regardeth the perfyte

fyte good thynges, the whiche may be to them very profitable in time to come/ but thynges that be hurtful, vayne & vncertayne/ euery man with ryght great laboure seketh and desyreth. Why do folke so leudly, so vnwisely, & so obstinatly enbusy them self to be exalted? Euery man may lerne/ at the lestwyse by example of me/ that all worldly dingnitees sone decay, & be most like vnto cloudes, the whiche ofte times in an hour space/ are wont to be very large & brode/ and nothynge at all. I my selfe was sometyme the mooste puyssant and mightyeste of all kynges and emperours, and was neuer ouercome, but was the hygest in honour of al men. I subdued and conquered kynges & nations innumerable, & the world by me was conquered: I serched the sees: and at the last I attemted the element: Truely I had ben fortunate and happy, if I myght haue

made dethe also afrayde: But deth that ouercometh all thynges/dydde ouercome me, yea, with a lyttell feuer: There was neuer bubble blowen vppon the water more sooner flasshed, nor smoke in the ayre more sodaynly consumed and gone/than all that great brute of my famous dedes, vanysshed and layde. Delas howe greatly/ye and howe sodaynly am I changed and tourned from that great Alexandre/to whose cõmaundementes all the worlde some tyme fearfully obeyed? Now I am he that maye be bothe despysed and hurte of a poore page, and cannat reuenge me. Somtyme the gret worlde was lesse than my couetous mynde: but nowe I am thrust in to a lytell vessell, and.vii.fote space sufficeth me. Dethe onely maketh a shewe and a profe of what valure mens bodyes be. Somtyme I was of great and hyghe estate, and right

goodly

goodly to beholde, adorned with fresshe purple apparail, and a bright shynynge deademe: and nowe I am mooste lothly to loke on. Here I lye, dry bare bones and asshes. What auayleth me my noble blode & linage? What auayleth me my glystrynge golden tombe? What good do all these curyous buyldynges of steples vnto me that neyther can se nor fele? But wolde to god my soule myght haue dyed with my body: and that after this bodyly deth, a more sharper and a greuousser dethe shuld nat haue folowed. But Welas, the immortall soule is now constrayned to suffer peyne for all the yuel lyuynge of the bodye. O, howe happy be they that in theyr lyfe tyme may vnderstonde these thynges, the which we haue proued, but we perceyue those thynges nowe to late? They be wyse, they I saye be wyse, the whiche be contentedde with theyr

fortune and state, and stryue to subdue and ouercome them selfe / and rather to rule them selfe wel than to gouerne other: and rather to enbusy them selfe to gette and opteyne the celestiall and perpetuall kyngdome, than this erthly and vnstedfaste empyre. He is a myghty kyng, what so euer he be that ruleth hym selfe wel.

What thynge can be spoken more truly than this oration? And what is he that this so trewe and so pitefull an oration / wolde nat feare and withdrawe from the couetous desire of honours?

¶ Of the necessite of dethe / the whiche suffreth nothynge to be durable. The. vi. Chapter.

I Vse but to many wordes / namelye in a thing more clerer than the daye lyght. For why, this is the course of thynges nowe a dayes, that

that whan the olde hiſtories mention or reherſe any thynges to be marueyled at, ther is no man welnere, that wyl gyue credence therto, whā he may ſe before his face more greuouſe examples than he can rede of. But touchynge dethe (bycauſe I ſpeake therof) I am wont ſpecially to marueile howe this ſhuld be that ſeinge that nothynge is ſo moche in our ſight, as dethe is / that nothinge is more farther out of our thought and remembrance. ye and mortall folkes are deducted and drawen out of this vocabull or worde Mors, that is to ſaye dethe: Wherfore we can no ſooner be named Mortales, that is to ſaye mortall folkes, but forthe with oure owne eares gyue vs warnynge of dethe. What an oblyuyon or a forgetfulnes is this? Howe recheles are folkes myndes, yea maye I nat ſaye / howe fonde and frantyke? Haue we no more remem

remembraunce? Haue we dronke so moche forgetfulnes of the ryuer Letheus, that we can nat beare those thynges in mynde, the which shewe them selfe and appere styll to vs on euery side? Be we as it were stones astonyed, that these thynges / the which we bothe se and here so often tymes / can nat moue nor stere vs? Can we se so moch as one of the old worlde alyue? And also we se that cruell dethe spareth or forbereth no kynde of folkes in our tyme. Oure fore fathers of old tyme be deed and gone: And as Licero sayth, They haue lyued / and without any difference we must go the same way / and other that be to come shall folowe after vs. And so all we in maner of a swyft ryuer rolle in to the Occian, that is to saye we be all whyrled in to the pytte of dethe. And as Horace sayth / One nyght abideth for vs all: And ones we muste nedes trede

trede the trace of dethe. The funerals of yong and old are very thicke mingled togyther. And cruell Proserpine forbeareth no man. Innumerable people of yonge, olde, and myddell age, dye here and there / of our felowes / of our acquaintance, of our kynsfolke, frendes / father, mother, and chyldren: and we our selfe that must nedes dye / be conuersant a mydmonges the hepes of them that dye: And all be it that we be borne vnder the same condicion / that we must nedes dye, yet we fere nat deth. Thou sayest / wherfore doest thou commande me to thynke on dethe, I am yet yonge and lustye, I am farre from whore heares, and farre from an olde wrynkeled foreheed? They shulde lyue in thoughte and care for drede of dethe, that be olde and croked, and stoupyng to the erth ward / that haue a lyghte shakynge heed / hangynge chekes / and holowe eies / a con-

a continuall droppynge nose / a fewe tethe and rotten: the whiche whan they haue liued as longe as a crow / than they reken their age vpon their fyngers. I am farre from all these thinges. Doth nat my yonge blode, that courageth myne harte and spyrytes, my stronge armes and bygge sides, and all my bodye lusty and in good lykynge, bydde me to hope after longe lyfe? But I praye the tell me, hathe god promysed to the eyther whore heares or wrinkyls? If thou se no man dye but olde folkes / than lyue careles / & haue no mynde of dethe vntyll the tyme that thou haue whore heares and wrinkyls. But if that dethe do steale vpon folkes of euery age, if dethe strangle them that be nat yet borne, nat sleing them, but remouyng them from life: If dethe plucke the children awaye that sucke on theyr mothers breastes: If dethe snatche awaye laddes

and

and gyrles: Jf dethe pulle awaye yonge men & maydens: Jf dethe ſle myghty ſtronge men: Jf dethe attrappe olde men: and fynally if deth ſpareth no perſon of no maner condition / age, ſtrengthe / nor beautye, ſuppoſeſt thou it wyll forbeare the onely abouc all other? Jt is for certayne, that an olde man can nat lyue longe. And thou that arte a yonge man mayſt ſone dye. And loke how certayne and ſure an olde manne is to dye/euen ſo vncertayn and vnſure a yonge manne is to lyue. There is no man ſo olde but that he may lyue one daye longer: Nor there is no mā ſo yonge that cā aſſure him ſelf to liue from morow tyl night. And for a trouth/if thou marke it well / thou ſhalt fynde that the moſt parte that dye be yonge folkes. And all be hit that hore age hath alway ben ſcars, yet was it neuer more ſcarſer, nor more diſpiſed than it is now a dais.

Now

Howe many canst thou shewe me / that haue lyued (I saye not so longe as Tython, Nestor, Sibyll, Mathusale) but an hundred yeres? yea howe many be there that lyue. lx. yeres? Forsothe scarsly one amonge a thousande. And howe shorte a tyme is it? And yet thou seest howe fewe come therto: so fragyll or brittill, so vncertayne / and subiecte to so manyfold chances is the life of man. Wylt thou good Joyce haue of this thynge a clere and a commodious similitude or fygure? Beholde how in the begynnynge of the yere thou seest a tree flouryshe, and is so replenysshed or loden with flowers or blossoms / that the trunke or bodye therof can nat be sene / and scarslye the leaues: the whiche tree semeth to brynge forth more plentie of frute than the tree is able to beare. But yet of all this great nombre of blossoms very fewe proue: for some of them

them be corrupted and distroyed with wormes, some with spyders, and some with wynde and wether ar beten downe. And the frute that remayneth, whan the blossoms be gone, by lytell and lytell waxe greater. And than (I pray the) do they all hange styll tyl they be rype? No truely. Many of them be worme eaten, some the wynde and the wether beateth downe, some by great stormes are corrupted and rotted, and some other, by other mischance are distroyed. In so moche that at the laste, where thou hopest to haue greate abundaunce of frute, vnneth thou gethereſt thre or foure apples: Nor mans lyfe dothe peryshe with no lesse inconueniences. There be a thousande maner of syckenesses, a thousande chances or occasions of deth, a thousãde maner of murders, & a thousande sortes of snares, that dethe layeth for vs: through the

whiche mo dye than by auncientnes and time. And ſcynge than that our lyfe is ſubiecte to ſo many and great peryls: beholde I praye the / howe wytleſſe and brainesicke we be, that lyue as thongh we ſhuld neuer dye? We be right carefull for thoſe thynges that pertayne nothynge to vs: but that thynge that ſhulde inſtruct vs agaynſt dethe, we care nat for. What if one kynge that hathe mortall warre with an other knewe nat for certayne howe nere his ennemie, were but hauyng knowlege and vnderſtandyng by ſpyes, that he ſhuld lye in enbuſhement nat farre of, and whā he ſawe conuenient tyme, how he wolde ruſſhe out vppon hym, Troweſt thou that he in this caſe wolde mynde the buyldynge of bathes / or to prepare a bankette, or to wedde a wyfe? But that he wolde rather imagyne howe to augmente his armye, to caſte a bulwarke / to

make

make good watche, and to mynde his armour and wepens, and other thinges belongynge to warre, wher by he may defende hym from inuasyon, & also discomfyte his ennemie? And for this wyll he care fore more diligently, for as moche as he knoweth nat what tyme, nor on whiche syde the bussheminte wyll breake oute vppon hym. But dethe, our chiefe enemye, in euery place, and at all tymes of oure age, hathe layde a thousande maner of imbussheme[n]tes to attrappe and disceyue vs. And yet in the meane tyme a goddes name, we stande gaurynge and darynge at ryches, we fede and to derely cherysshe oure bodyes, and seke to beare a rule and mayster shyppe. But and wee wolde atte all tymes considre the great vnstedfastnesse and wauerynge of this disceitefull lyfe, and howe that dethe styll contynually hangethe ouer vs,

we ſhuld driue in to our own eares, that that the prophet ſayd vnto the ſycke kynge, Dyſpoſe thy houſe, for thou ſhallte dye: than incontinente al theſe thynges, which to our great hurt ſeme ſauori & ſwete, wold wax bytter and ſower, and thoſe that we thynke ryght precious, wolde ſeme vyle and lyttell worthe: and thoſe that we repute noble and gay thynges, wold appere foule & vngoodly. So lyghtly one thought or inwarde remembraunce of dethe, perſuadeth vs to ſette naughte by all worldly thynges. O thou couetous man, to what ende or entente doeſt thou gether ſuche abundaunce of golde? Dethe is at thy backe redy to ſnatch all away. Why doeſt thou prepare ſo many great fardelles for ſo ſhorte a iourney? Daſte thou forgot what happened to the foole that the goſpell ſpeaketh of? To whom, reioyſynge that his barnes were full of

corne

corne, and promysinge hym selfe ma-
ny greatte pleasures / it was sayde:
Thou foole, this same nyght thou
shalte be slayn / and than who shall
be mayster of thy goodes? O thou
mooste foolysshe or vnwyse felowe,
why doest thou inclyne or sekest for
so madde or vnstedfaste ioyes, ye
with so great rebuke or blame? Lo,
beholde deth is euen at hande / redy
to tourne these so foule, shorte, and
leude lustes of the body / in to euer-
lastynge peyne and turmente. And
thou that sekest to beare a rule, to be
in high auctorite / and to raigne roy-
ally aloste, what an vngratious de-
syre stereth the therto? Loke / seest
thou nat that dethe is at thy dore,
the whiche from this hyghe estate
wyll throwe the heedlynge to the
grounde: as it were a hurle wynde /
it wyll beare or carie awaye bothe
the and all thyne? wherfore Radul-
phus Agricola dyd nat onelye ryght

counnyngely, but also as verytably or trewlye endyte as folowethe.

¶ Deth ouerthroweth & distroyeth al thing
And all that is borne must nedes decay
Onely vertue shall neuer haue endyng
& good actes or dedes shal endure alway.

FOr what thynge elles remaynethe / atte the extreame and mooste greuous poynte of oure lyfe / but onely vertu? Than the membres languysshe / and the colour of the blode and the lyfe to gether vanysshe away / the visage diethe with a deedly wanne colour / the eies that a lyttell before were so quicke and lyuely of syght, are than obscured with perpetuall darkenes / and fynally all the holle bodye commeth colde without any sensyblenes: than the myserable soule / on whome as one destitute, lyeth al the weight of the busynes, shalbe drawen to that inexorable place of iugement to

make

make a counte and gyue a rekenyng howe and in what maner it hathe mynystred all thynges. What I say shall than remayne of al thy worldly ryches/ honours/ and possessions/ the whiche to gette to gether thou dyddest consume all thy lyfe dayes: On whom than wylte thou seke for succour and helpe: O myserable wretche / to whom wylt thou go? Whither wylte thou flee? To thy rychesse? Welas they can nothynge helpe the/ and thoughe they coude / yet are they in other mens possessió. wylte thou go to thy voluptuous pleasures? These lyke as they be ioyned to the bodye/ so they dye to gether with the body. Wylte thou flee to thy lusty and valyant yonge age? Ah euerye mannes olde age is vnlyke to his youthe. Wylt thou flee to thy comely shap and beautye, the whiche very late made the proude / & entyced euerye bodye to loue the?

This thinge also like as a rose nipte or plucte from the stalke, sadeth: so to gether by deth it withereth all a way. withereth away quod I, nay I may saye, it sadeth awaye in to a grisely vgglynes. For neuer none loued so well the beautie and shappe of a liuynge creature, as he abhorreth the cors or carkes of one that is deed. Wilt thou renne to thy olde glorie? This thynge also, lyke as I haue sayd, vanysheth away vtterly whan thou diest. Finally to whom wilte thou calle and crie for helpe? Wilte thou go to the felowshippe of thy frendes? Velas some of them, as soone as fortune leaueth the, they go their way, like as swalowes do whan somer is gone: and the other, if any remayne stylll thy frendes, can not come to helpe the. And what can it auayle or helpe the, if thy miserable frēdes wayle and knockē on their breastis, if they scratche their

visages

viſages, if they, wepinge at thy funerall, wolde ſhede all theyr bloode turned into teares/ or if they wolde for thy ſake rũne madde, or ſle them ſelfe to beare the companye: They may ſo hurt them ſelfe/ but they can not delyuer the. Be wyſe alſo and conſidre thy ſtate and condition betimes/prepare and haue in a redines thoſe thinges/with whiche thou beinge fortified, mayſt careles or without drede abide the laſte daye.

Thoughe richeſſe, pleaſure, and nobienes were bothe certayne and profitable/ whiche thinge is farre contrarie: yet without dout to one that dieth, they are a heuy burden. But than vertue begynneth to be profitable. And ſurely if theſe worldly thynges wolde neuer leaue vs/ yet muſte we nedes forgo them: but vertue dothe neuer forſake our companie, nor ceſſeth to helpe vs.

That

That the worlde is both miserable and scelerous. The seuenth Chapyter.

THou clerelye perceyuest good Joyce/howe false or disceiuable/ howe flittynge, and howe pestilent the goodes of this worlde be (if they of right may be called goodes) now contrarye wyse/ I wyll declare to the in fewe wordes, the ylles that come of them. Peraucnture in tyme past it was no wonder, though we were plucked and drawen with pein out of this worlde, whan hit flouryssh as it were in youthe: but nowe except we disceyue our selfe, in what thynge may the worlde disceyue vs? What euer and as many slaughters / murthers / ruines, and distructions/that chaunced or fell on mankynde in tyme past / some at one tyme and some at a nother, they assayle and enuade vs in our dayes all

on

on a hepe at ones, as warres/derth, ſcarſite/ penury, barenneſſe, & many a ſtraunge ſickenes? yea what yuel or miſchiefe is it/ that we haue nat ſeen in our dayes? J am nowe. xxiiii. yeres olde/ and in all this ſeaſon the warre neuer ſtynted. Jt wold ſeme that Sylla were come agayne with his partiall parte takynge/or ceditiō. And whiche ſo euer of the parties dothe ouercome, well J wotte the countraye is ſubdued, and gyltles doth ſuffer great affliction. What miſerable examples of penurie and famyn haue we ſene? Jn ſo moche that many haue lyued with beaſtes foode and many haue dyed for very hūger. And as the worlde goth now, a mā had nede to hāue the riches of king Creſus, which yet for all that, he ſhal with gret ſparyng & migardeſhyp ſcantly fynde his houſſholde. And farther: J putte the caſe that thou thy ſelfe doeſt lyue welthyly: yet

yet euery thinge is so full of calamitie, that to here the lamentations/ and to se the miseries/ wherin other poore creatures ar wretchidly wrapped/shal make the miserable. More ouer the sedes of all mischefes ar so sprouted out/that nowe in our days we passe and farre excede the ironne age, whcrof men dyd synge a thousande yeres ago.

¶ Of sturdy indurate iron the beste age
framed was,
Than preased in al mischiefe the worlde
rounde aboute,
whiche of a worse mettal nature did cõpasse
For shamefastnes, and trouthe, with feithe
were driuen out
In whose stede came in an vngrations route
Subtilte, falshode, meyntenance & decepte,
Ethe one to decepue other that lie i awayte.

¶ with Couetous that captife, to catche
that catche maye
By robberie and extorcion their lyues for
to leade,
Ethe one of other standinge in a fraye,

The

The father of his ſonne ſtandeth in feare and dzede,
One bzother of an other can ſcantly truſte to ſpede,
In Methamozphoſeos ye may rede this warke/
In Iuuenal alſo, that mocke noble clarke.

Whicke ſayth, howe the wozlde, that we lyue in nowe,
Is wozſe than the ironne wozlde, that men dydde ſo calk,
Foz nature conde neuer fynde the meanes yet howe,
That any name of mettall myght aptely nowe falk,
To calke this wozlde by his name, whicke wozlde is wozſte of all,
Wozſe than the iron wozlde, of copper, oz of bzaſſe,
This wozlde is the wzetched wozlde, that euer was.

Foz if it were founde, that a man nowe a dayes
Wolde knowlege the gage oz pledge to hym layde
Oz delyuer agayne, whan the partie hym pzays,

A bag of money, that was to hym connaide
In trust for to kepe, and truly agayn repaid
It myght welny be enrolde, and wrytten
for a wonder
That couetous and money coude so de-
parte a sonder.

¶ So wonderfull it were & so prodigious
That it myght well be regestred / and
ripely enrolde
Of the Tuscans, amonge theyr recordes
superstitious
Engrossed with enchauntementes mer-
uaylous to be tolde
Pronostycatynge what thynge so euer
they wolde
By procuration of a lambe that crow-
ned there was
Amonge them to brynge suche wonders
to passe.

¶ Of true and faythfull people the nom-
bre is so small
That I trowe there be scante so many
good men
As Thebes the cyte had gates aboute
theyr wall
Which had but. vii. gates as authors me ken
Which nombre mai esely be writē with a pen

Or

Or as there be but .vii. passages of Nilus that flode
Onneth may be founde so many true men and good.

¶ What wilt thou do in the worlde/ if thou canste nat nor haste nat the cast to forswere thy selfe, nor to ymagene fraude and gyle/ nor to disceyue thy neyghboure, nor to steale and bribe? But thou sayest, what haue I to doo with these worldlye maners and yuell customes? All my care is onely to lyue trewly & ryghtously. If al thy care be to lyue rightously, loke that thou get the lyghtly oute of this worlde, for the world and vertu wyll in no wyse agree togyther. Thou mightest saye that I lyed/ if he that is the very frende of vertu dyd nat say/ that all the worlde is set on wickednes. Nor thou shuldest nat saye smylynge to thy selfe: what so euer other do/ perteyneth nothyng to me; I care but for myne owne

owne selfe. Truly swete Joice/thou art clene wyde and out of the way: for it skylleth greatly with whome thou doest leade thy lyfe, for the diseases of the soule spraule abrode or infecte none other wyse, than the cõtagious maladies of the body do. There is nothyng more perilous thã yuell company. Admytte it be so/ that thou loucst vertue aboue all thynges: and wylt accompany the with an vngratious caytife: Howe longe shall it be or thou mayest reduce hym to thy maners? yea/ he shall rather (as we be gyuen and enclyned naturally to yll) corrupte the with his venome, and enfecte the with his scabbed cursednesse, and make the like him in condicions/and at the last, the comon prouerbe shall be verified on you twayne, that is, Birdes of one colour flye togyder. But thou sayest/ who shall dryue or compelle me to leade my lyfe with

vngra-

tious and a mischeuous felowe?
Doest thou aske that question? I
tell the thyn age and nedefull busy-
nes: and farthermore that vngentyl
shamefastnesse: but yet of trouth, it
is most part in men of gentyl mynde
and corage: And lastly, the vnwor-
thy condycions of thy felowes. If
thou be requyred to go make good
chere, or to do or playe some other
leude pranke / it boteth or aueyleth
the nat to excuse the by some busy-
nesse / or els that thou arte acrased,
for though thou swere it on a boke /
thou shalt nat be beleued: and eyther
they wil note the for a nigarde or els
for a slouene. What wylte thou do?
Perauenture bycause thou woldest
nat be so noted, thou wylte folowe
theyr mynde and entente. When ye
come to the tauern or brothel house /
there euery man hath his wenche.
I tell it that is mooste honest / I am
ashamed to reherce theyr other fyl-

thy dedes: and yet they be nat a-
ſhamed to commytte and do them
many tymes and ofte. Than they
begyn to ſtryue and crake who may
drynke beſt: And he that can drynke
mooſte, is the meryeſt / the gayeſt,
and the iolyeſt felowe. Than what
is it that dronkenes wil nat prouoke
or cauſe to be done? Than Pythyas
ſemethe moche fayrer. Than Chre-
mes is farre more meryer. And it is
bothe trewely and commonly ſayd:
that without good metes and drin-
kes / bodily luſt waxeth colde. And
whan they be wery of drynkynge
and banketynge / than they fall to
reuelynge and dauncynge. Thanne
whoſe minde is ſo well ordred, ſo
ſadde / ſtable / and conſtante / that
theſe wanton dauncynges, the ſwin-
ginge of the armes / the ſwete ſowne
of the inſtrumentes / and feminin ſyn-
gynges / wolde nat corrupte, ouer-
come, and vtterly mollifie?

ye

ye and farther the balades that they ſynge be ſuch, that they wold kendel vp the corage of the olde & cold Laomedon, and Neſtor. And whan the miſtrel doth make a ſigne to ſtint, thā if thou do nat kyſſe her / that thou leading by the hande diddeſt daunce with, thou ſhalte be taken for a ruſticall or an vplandyſhe vyllayne / with out any good maners or nurture. Of the other ſportes & playes, the whiche are more ſhametull than theſe / and inuented onely for bodyly luſte and wantonnes / I wyll nat ſpeke. Wold to good they wold no more vſe them. If thou ſhuldeſt refuſe to do any of theſe thynges / and woldeſt aſſaye to do ſome thing of more ſadnes and prudence / they wyll eſteme and counte the vnmanerly, cloubbyſhe, frowarde / and cleane contrarye to all mennes mynes. And to the entente that thou woldeſte eſchewe that blemyſhe

or blame, O what fylthy actes doeſt thou commyt: So thus while thou woldeſt flye and eſchewe hatred / while thou art aſhamed to be repu-ted waywarde or frowarde. whyle thou art aſhamed in dede to ſeme or be a lyttel ſhamefaſt (as ſaint Augu-ſtyne ſaythe) thou doeſt forgette all ſhame: And whan thou art enfected with lyke ſcourſe and ſcabbe, than thou endeuoureſt thy ſelfe, and goeſt about to enfect other. But admytte thou doeſt nat accompany with no wicked or ſynfull caytyfe (whiche were a thynge of greatte meruayle) yet the poyſon of the maladie or ſickenes is wont nat onely with tou-chynge, that is to ſay *contactu*/ wher-of the maladies or diſeaſes be called *contagia* / but alſo with beholdynge to crepe and enfecte one. For the holle and ſounde eies with behol-dynge or lokynge on ſore eyes take hurte. And verely I ſuppoſe / that

the

the eies be the chiefe occasion of all lewde entycementes/ that prouoke and stere vs to fylthy syn. Therfore moste gentyl Joyce/ as thou desyrest thyn owne welthe/ loke that thou flee and eschewe this scabbed and scuruy company: and drawe vnto them/ by whose conuersation thou mayst amende thy lyse.

¶ What felicite is in solitarie lise. The. viii. Captre.

ALbe it that I suppose, that I haue spoken of the foresayde thinges sufficiently/ yet to the intent that thou shuldest nat onely with a good wyll but also ioyfully scyppe from the world and ronne to religion, that is to saye, nat so moche hatynge or agreued with the yls of the worlde/ as desyrous of our delicious pleasures, me thynke it were nat inconuenient to reherse nowe in

fewe wordes / the commodytes of our lyfe, whiche thynge to do, it behoueth me to be brefe, both bycauſe I haue ſpent moche tyme laboure, and paper, in ſtraytly dyſcuſſyng of the yuels & calamites of this worlde, and yet the greatnes therof requyreth moche more than hath ben ſpoken (for in maner no wordes or time of communication to diſcuſſe it / coud ſuffiſe) and eke bycauſe me thought thou beganſt to waxe wery of my babblynge, and alſo bycauſe thole thynges are more eaſyly perceyued than declared. Therfore I wolde rather that thou ſhuldeſt lerne them by experience than by my declaryng / and rather to ſerche them oute thy ſelfe than to be perſuaded. Nowe ſwete Joyce withdrawe the lyghtlye from the troublous buſynes of this worlde, and come to vs. And than at laſt thou ſhalte perceyue and ſe howe farre the falſe and diſceyuable

uable prosperite of the worlde doth differ from very felycyte, and howe farre our labours and trauayles do passe and excell thy delites. I saye thou shalt vnderstand and perceyue hit, lyke as one were waked out of his slepe/the which all the while he slepeth, supposynge that imaginations and phantasies, that appere to hym in his slepe/be true/he reioyceth/he dredeth, he exhaltethe hym selfe, and is moued with a thousand affections. But as soone as the slepe is goone, he than perceyueth, that he was deluded and mocked with imaginations, yea and he hym selfe laugheth at his dreames: So lykewyse/whan thou shalt clerely perceyue and vnderstande the felicite of our institution or lyfe, O howe ofte than/whan the dreames of thy former lyfe come to thy remembrance, and beynge awaked oute of that worldly slombre/wylte thou saye?

A good lorde, was I euer so farre be syde my selfe, that any of these tryfels delyted me? Haue suche phantasyes in tymes passed of false and vayne goodes so rauyshed my mynde and wytte, that no desyre of thynges that be good in dede coude entre in to me? Therfore nowe good Joice, if thou be a slepe awake, excepte thou haddest leauer be happy in dreamynge than happy in dede. If thou nappe a litel, open thyn eies and shake it of, lest the depe slepe stele vpō the. But in case that thou be awaked, as I suppose thou art, than lest the example of slepers, or elles of the violēce slepe persuade the ther to: hye the as faste as thou canste out of this lande of Babylon, ful of dreames and shadowes; and gette the apase to oure Hierusalem. Why lokest thou be hynde the? Why staggerest? Why dost thou staye or stand any whyle? It is alway hurtfull,

as Lucan saythe, to differre or prolonge these thynges forthe, that be redye prepared. Go to, breake of al delayes: for it is nat a lyght or a triflynge busynes / that thou arte in hande with / the matter concerneth or toucheth thy soule: the which is so worthy & so noble a thynge, that for the welthe therof thou oughtest nat onely to leaue and forsake those thynges, that thou loueſt most derely, but also wyllyngely to take on the and suffer mooste harde and greuous peyne and trauayle.

If an excellente and a perfecte counnynge phisition wolde saye to one, that were sycke / and vnlyke to escape dethe: Suffer a lytell whyle, and I wyll restore the to thy helthe agayne: Tell me what rough handlynge/peynefull touchynge/and greuous throwes / wolde he with ryghte good wyll endure? He wold suffer his lymmes to be torren and

haled with boiſtous iron inſtrumentes/to be launced,cutte, burned,and a thouſande other wayes paynfully handled, yea he wolde ſuffre ſome peynes / that be more greuous than the very dethe, to the ende to eſcape dethe, and a lyttell whyle prolonge his wretched lyfe. O good lorde / ſhulde any thynge ſeme greuous to the to ſuffer,that thou mighteſt ther bi eſchew the deth of thy ſoule, yea deth euerlaſting? If the chance ſtode ſo, that thou muſt nedes choſe one of theſe.ij.conditions/either to ſuffer thy body to be clene extincted, & vtterly diſtroyed/that thy ſoule might liue euerlaſtingly: or els by dethe of thy ſoule to opteyn life of thy body: I beleue thou woldeſt nat take long aduiſement, excepte thou were more madder than any franticke man,but that thou woldeſt quickely choſe rather the perpetual life of the ſoule/ than the very ſhorte lyfe of the body.

dy. And therfore tel me good Joice/ wylte thou nat lyue bothe bleſſedly and perpetually? Jt were greatte marucyle but thou woldeſt / for what is he that wolde nat? But thou wylte ſaye: By what meane maye J opteyne to lyue alway bleſſedly? Go to, J praye the beholde what a great thynge with a lyttell labour thou mayſte come by. To opteyne this thynge/ thou nedeſt nat to flye in the ayre with Dedalus wynges, nor to trauayle and paſſe the daungerous ſees / nor to take on hande the peynefull labours of Hercules, nor to leape in to the fyre, nor no manne wyll conſtrayne the, that for this thynge thou ſhuldeſt hale and teare thy lymmes, nor ſlee thy ſelfe. Fynallye / who wolde ſaye that the martyrs in olde tyme were peuiſhe, the whiche on hope and truſte of this felicitie / wolde nat denye or refuſe any maner peynes

or

or cruell turmentes, no, nat the very deth to be harde or greuous to thé? Take hede I praye the, howe abundauntly oure benigne and lyberall lorde hath bestowed his giftes vpon vs, and agayne, how easye and light his commaundementes be. He promised euerlastynge felicite to them, that haue deserued dethe. What thyng can be more benigne or bountifull than this promise? yet what is more sure and certein? But now, what dothe he commaunde the to do? Forsothe nothynge, but that in the meane tyme thou shuldest diligently prepare and make thy selfe redy to receyue so great and so excellent a gyft? Thou wylt aske me, by what way this shuld be done? No man can receyue the very felicite, so longe as he is possessed and holden in captyuyte and thraldome of false felicite. Wylt thou liue euerlastyngly? Than loke that thou lyue well.

Wylt

wilt thou entre in to paradise? Thā loke that thou forsake this worlde: for as it is moost mischifefull, so it is most troubleous and peynfull. Doest thou desyre and couet to be ioyned to god? Than se that thou endeuoir the to be oute of the dyuels snares. Doest thou loue true ryches? Than throwe awaye from the, the false. If thou haue delite in very honours: leaue thy sekyng for the false. What more? Doest thou loue very trewe beatytude? Loke thanne that thou forsake these swete trauailes/yea the laborous swetenes of this worlde. What thynge is more softer or esyer than these preceptes? Who so euer kepeth them, shall haue very felicite for his rewarde: and the kepyng of goddes commaundementes is the begynnynge of felycyte. As though he commaunded thus: Leaue to be wretched, that ye may be welthye: Leue to be seruauntes, that ye may

enioy

enioy liberte. O what a great dyf-
ference is betwene goddes comman-
dementes and the dyuels? O, how
contrarily they stryue and contende
togyther? For after the dyuell hath
caught vs on his hoke with a lyttell
bayte of false delectation: O good
lord into what horrour or vgglines,
in to what fylthines, and in to what
myseries dothe he caste vs? And
at length, whā he hath deluded and
mocked vs his fyl, he strangleth vs.
God by very lyttell and shorte soli-
citudes and greses (the whiche we
suffer nat through any faute of the
thynges, but through oure owne
faute) leadeth vs to ioy increchble,
and at length he gyueth vs the bliſſe
of heuen. The dyuels promotion is
disceytfull, his warrefare is sower,
and his wages (which as the scrip-
ture doeth wytnes is dethe) is most
lower of all. Goddes obligation is
faythfull and sure: the longer that
his

his warre endureth, the ſweter and more pleaſant it is: and his wages, whiche is bleſſed immortalite / is moſt ſweteſt of all. The lyfe of them that folowe the dyuell is wretched, the dethe more wretched, and after dethe a lyfe moſt wretched of all.
But to goddes ſeruauntes the lyfe is welthy / the dethe more welthy / and after deth folowyeth a lyfe moſte welthy and bleſſed of all. Who wolde nat mooſte gladly, yea and frely make warre vnder ſo eaſy and ſo liberall a capitayne / whiche putteth vs to ſo ſwete labours? If thou gyue but lyttell credence to my wordes, harken to hym exhortynge vs / that canne nat diſceyue (for what leaſynge can trouthe make?)
Take my yocke vppon you, and ye ſhall fynde reſte for youre ſoules: for my yocke is ſwete / and my burthen lyghte. What ioye troweſt thou, after theyr victorie, ſhall they haue

haue/triumphynge in heuen euerla-
ſtyngly, with moſt high renowmed
pompe/ to whom the labour of the
warfare here is ſo delectable? Now
pleaſaunte ſhall that happye liberte
be, if his yocke be ſwete to vs? I
wote well there be ſome, that wyll
take for a wounder, theſe wordes
that I haue ſayde: but vndoubted
they be of that ſame ſorte/ whiche
moſt lyke vnto brute beaſtes, deme
all felicite to reſt and be in the taſt of
the mouthe and pleaſure of the bea-
ly. It is harde to make ſuche to be-
leue, that the labours, whervppon
the lyfe of religious perſons is em-
ployed, be neyther greuous/ nor he-
uy or peynfull/ but rather pleaſaunt
& iocunde. But ſeyng ſuch felowes
wyll nat beleue the very trouthe, I
wolde they ſhuld ſerche and make a
proſe therof them ſelfe. And on pein
of my lyfe they ſhall nat be diſceye-
ued, ſo that they do theyr beſt/ and
aſſay

assay it as they ought to do. What if it irke or greue them to make a prose? Than truely I wolde that they shulde gyue credence to those that haue proued religion. Forsoth I dare affyrme it with an othe, that euery thyng in religion is full of plesure. Nothyng is more plentifull or abundant thā our pouerte/ nothyng is more restfull than oure labour or trauayle/ our abstinence and fastyng is ryght suffisant, oure narowe or strayte rowme/ is to vs large, wyde/ and brode, our watchynge is to vs more gladder than any slepe. But and I shulde swere this vppon a boke: yet some wold nat beleue me: yea they wolde deme me, ioynynge those so contrary thinges to gether, no wyser than he that wolde go about to proue that the darkenesse is lyght, and the light darkenes / that the fyre is colde/ and the water hot. But what shulde one saye to these

beastly creatures, the which haue no reson / nor they vnderstand no higher than the corporall sensys? Well / yet I wyll nat leaue them so: They muste be allured and drawen with some argument / very familiar and playne to their vnderstandynge, that by those thynges / the whiche vnto them be mooste notable / they maye coniecte what these thynges be / of the which they haue but smal knowlege. Lette vs traine them in to the countrey, or els if that be greuous vnto them, let vs go nere home to the hauen, and call to vs one of the mariners / whiche we wyll / and say: Come hither good felowe / is nat the labour and toylynge, that thou hast a shipbourd very greuous and peynefull to the? No sayth he, it is a pleasure. Howe shulde that be? For in this maner gettynge of thy lyuynge / semeth to be mo and greatter incommodites than in any other.

other. It is treuthe saythe he. But than on the tother syde / there be many thynges that greately encorage and comforte me. Fyrst / what thyng is it / that swete luker or wynnynge dothe nat make pleasaunte? Nothyng is more plentiful or richer than the see. There be many alyue at this day / which were very poore / and nowe by trauaylynge and turmoylynge on the see onely, they be excedyngly riche. Who can tell wether it shal be my chaunce lyke wyse or no? Farther / the customance and continuall vse therof, easeth a great parte of my grefe: the whiche continuall custome in thynges is without doute of so great effecte / that nothynge is so greuous or paynfull to be done / but that the ofte doynge therof maketh it eyther pleasante or at the leste lyghte and easye. And lastly, there be certayne thynges, the whiche do mitigate and make vs to

forget the peyne of our laboure and toylynge / as ſyngynge / talkynge, prope ſportis, and a thouſande other ſuche lyke thynges. ye haue harde this I thinke plainly inough. Nowe if we ſhulde go from warke houſe to warkehouſe / I trow euery man wolde anſwere and ſaye to vs the ſame / or very lyke wordes. What foloweth than? Truely if vncertayne hope for ſo ſmalle and vile luker, maketh ſo greuous laboure and toilyng pleaſant to theſe labourers and workemen: why ſhuld nat the moſt certayne and ſure abydyng for euerlaſtynge felicite, cauſe and worke the ſame in vs? If contynuall vſe and cuſtomance be of ſo great effecte, and may do ſo moch among them / for what cauſe ſhuld it nat do lyke wyſe in religion? If they haue wayes / with the whiche they alleuiate and eaſe theyr incommodites & grefes: no doubte we haue many

mo and better to mitigate oure tribulations and peynes.

¶ Howe that far greatter liberte is in religion than in the worlde. The ninth Chapiter.

BRefely to speke, these. iii. thinges be in religion, Libertie, Tranquillite, and pleasure. Of Libertie (wherof I wyll fyrst entreat) al we be most desirous, euery man abhoreth seruage and thraldome: in so moch that many haue kilde them selfe for very hate therof, which estemed lybertye better thanne lyfe, and dethe better than seruage. Wherfore if folkes delite so moch in libertie, that to bye false liberte cost them so derelye, howe gladly oughte they to embrace and desyre the institution of our lyfe, as it wherin is perfect and trewe libertie? But here some ignorante felowe wyll saye to me: If

lybertie (after Liceros diffinition) be to lyue as thou wylte thy selfe/ I can nat se how you religious men shuld haue any lybertie at all: for ye lyke byrdes shutte in a cage dare aduenture to do nothinge/ neither to cate nor spcke/ to slepe nor wake/ to goo nor come, nor so moche as ones to yane, without the abotte or superiour commaunde you. I praye you do suche folkes lyue at theyr lybertie? No certaynely, no more than horses or asses be at theyr lyberte, the whiche are brydled and pricked with the spurres/ to go here & there/ where so euer the ryder wyll haue them. But al this argument is sone dasshed. For we wyll nothyng but that that is leful: and therfore it is lefull for vs to doo what so euer we wyll. But touchynge our liberte/ I wyll speake more afterwarde. Nowe gyue me leaue to question agayne with the a lytell.

Tell

Tell me / arte thou nat aſhamed / to ſaye thou arte at thy lybertie in the worlde, whan thou haſte mo mayſters than thou canſte nombre in a daye? Fyrſt, thou muſt attende and apply thy minde about the worldly buſyneſſes / to the whiche who ſo euer ones gyueth hym ſelfe, they are wonte to wrappe and with ſuche cheynes to lynke hym in / that whither or whiche waye ſo euer they drawe, he muſt nedes folowe after. What and thou haue a wyfe / yea thou muſte nedes be had, for wedlocke is a thynge reciprocate? Take hede, there be an other peyre of fetters. For truely by that, there groweth to the an other greuous ſeruage, and oute of it thou canſte nat lyghtly get. Farther, what & thou be a wicked & a ſinful liuer? O good lorde, in to what a bondage & thraldome arte thou than ironne? Now loke how many vices thou haſt, & to

so many maysters thou muste obey / yea suche maisters as are most terrible / abominable / and cruell. For who wolde deme that man to be at his libertie, the whiche can nothing disobey his bodily luste, but what so euer it commaundeth, yea thoughe it be moste fylthy, as it is alway / and moste harde or peinefull / as it is oft, yet he must nedes obey? Thyne eyes desyre slepe / and fayne thou woldest slepe: but to the entente that thou shuldest nat / thy ryghte stately maistres fleshly luste lettethe the / she bydeth the to raue in the nyght / and to ronne aboute / to viset thy paramour / and in a foule stynkynge brothell howse amonge hoores & drabbes to passe forthe the nyghte without slepe. And there thou muste be gladde to please a stynkynge harlot: if she cõmaunde the to do any thinge thou muste do it: if she forbydde the to do any thynge, thou muste lyke

wyse

wyse obey: if she bydde the go thy waye, thou muste departe: and yf she bydde the come, thou muste re-returne. Dost nat thynk this a thraldome or bondage moste shamfull? What liberte hath a couetous man? He wolde fayne lyue at home, and so sluggardy biddeth him. But may he do so continually? Wyl his maystres couetousnes suffre that? What saith she? Liuest thou thus in sleuth? Why syttyst thou styll? Seest nat what great wynnynge thou myghtest haue, if thou woldest passe the see with marchandise in to France, Flanders, & other places? Come of, make the redy, thou must nedes take shyppynge: Lo, thou haste wynde at wyll. And thus to fullfyll thy maistres byddynge, thou trauayleſt by see and lande, yea all the wynter longe, and haste no care for the tempestes, nor for thy wyfe, nor for thy chyldren, no nor for thyn owne lyfe.

Doest thou reken thy selfe this wyse to lyue at lybertie? And in reasonynge a lyke prose maye be made of euery other vice: but bycause me thynke this talkynge waxeth tedious to the, I wyll passe ouer and speake of other thynges: but fyrste I wyll shewe the in general, that no man beynge wicked & synfull can be at his libertie. Were thou neuer ashamed & sory for thy filthi life? yes I beleue many a tyme. For who is so far past all grace, that neuer remembreth how he hath liued? And whan he seeth howe he is defyled, eyther for feare of punisshement, or for the loue of vertue, he hathe an entét or purpose to amende his life. Thou sayest it is so in very dede, and I stryue with my selfe other while to forgo my most wycked maners: but whan I am about it, ye wolde nat beleue with what force and violence custome in synne stoppeth me,

ye

ye & whether I wil or no/it driueth me to myne olde affections. Thou sayest well and truely. What than? Dost thou nat perceyue wretch in to what gret captiuite thou art brought? Dost nat now vnderstand/that thou art a seruant vnto vices? For whan they perceiue that thou art about to leaue them & to ron away, they lay handes vpon the, & as a seruant fast fettred, they throwe the in to the backe houle. Go to now madde fe-
low, and bost to vs thy liberte, that art a seruaunte to the worlde/to thy wyfe, to Fortune, to carnall lust, to couetousnes, to ambition, ye and to the diuel in so moch that thou maist well saye with the maried man in Terence called Syrus (saue onely that in hym it is feyned, and thou mayst say it matter in dede) I desire and wold fayne know, howe many maisters I haue. And truely/as our countrey man Pegius writeth.

To

To be seruant vnto many
Is a state of great mysery.

Wherto shulde I nowe remembre to the our liberte or fredome? Doth it nat seme a gret libertie to lyue out of fortunes dominion? If there be any fortune, and neyther to drede her cruelty, nor to desyre her fauour, nor nothynge greued with her aduerse frowardnes, nor nothyng the more insolent or stately for her luckines. We dare as boldly despyse her as Democritus dyd/ye and in derision make a pot at her. She hath no power ouer vs. We haue to gether with worldly ryches/throwen away from vs the desyre of the same riches: yea we haue with god plaid the vsurers. What and fortune slee vs? yet we surely knowe, that no greuous thynge can chance vnto vs saue onely fylthy synne. They be afrayd of dethe, the whiche lyue yll and synfully. But certaynly good

and

and vertuous people doo nat onely lyue oute of the drede of dethe, but also they desyre dethe / as the thyng that shulde from hence deducte and leade them to a more welthy and blessed lyfe. Farthermore we haue all to broken the iron yea the cheyne as hard as the adamante stone / of worldly busynes: and thus we beynge lyghted and delyuered of that most greuous fardel or burthen, and lyftynge vp oure myndes to heuen, what so euer is done beneth a low, we deme our selfe to haue nothynge to do therwith. Wherfore I praye the / what thyng can be more free or more at lybertie? Farthermore we haue by the helpe of god, shoken of our neckes the moste harde or heuy yocke of terrible Pharao. We haue gyuen ouer and lefte to serue mooste shamefull and reproued lordes, I meane vyces, but nat in suche wyse, that we shuld neuer at no tyme com

myt

mytte ſynne or offende / J wote nat whether any mortall creature maye do ſo in this lyfe or no. But as a valiant warriour, that opteyneth gret laude and preyſe / and the name of a conqueroure / entreth boldly in to batayle / and manly fyghteth hande to hande with his enmy / and there receyueth many a greuous wound, but yet he eyther taketh or ſleeth his ennemy: And on the other ſyde, he that is taken, though he haue neuer a wounde, no nat ſo moche as his ſkynne broken / yet he is iudged to be vanquyſſhedde and ouer come, and muſte ſuffer hym ſelfe to be ledde away as a preyſoner in to captiuite: So lyke wyſe if it happen vs to fyde, for as J haue ſayde / almoſt no man can kepe hym ſelfe alwaye from ſynne: yet we be ſure to ouercome, we be ſure of our libertie, and we be incertayntie of oure lyfe.

What dothe hit ſygnifye, that they

the

the whiche beare them ſelfe manly in bataylle are wonte to vncouer theyr breaſtis / to ſhewe the ſcarres of theyr woundes? Or why return they in to the cytie or lodgynges with the ſperes / dartes, and arowes ſtyckynge ſtyll in theyr bodies, lyke as they were by chance ſtryken and wounded in batayle? Certeynlye to the ende that all folke ſhulde ſe and vnderſtande / that they reken it moſte hygh worſhyp / in the defence of them ſelfe, and the welth of their countrey / to reſceiue moſt large and greuous woundes. yea truely they wold rather (wounded vnto deth) be caryed in to theyr tentes or lodginges with victorie / than holle and ſound (if they ſo coude) to come vnder the ſubiection of theyr ennemie. Who ſo euer ſubmitteth him to vice and ſynne / he is in great thraldome and a very bonde man to an enemy. But to what enemy? To an enemy moſt

moſt fylthy, moſt cruell / and mooſt mortall, the whiche wyll be more glad and fayne of our dethe, thanne of his owne lyfe. What a ſhamefull thynge is it for man, and what an vnworthy thynge to mans worthines / to endure or ſuffre / that the foule ſtynkynge dyuell ſhulde be his lorde and mayſter and ſet naught by him, to whom he is bounde both for him ſelfe and al that euer he hath? Specially ſyth to ſerue hym (I ſaye almighty god) is moſte high libertie, yea there is no libertie but that. Wherfore if there be any, that begynneth to waxe wery of that ſeruile and bondly libertie, and wolde gladly come to this free and mooſte liberall ſeruice: he muſte I ſaye ſeke it in religion. For as I haue ſayd, liberte is to ſerue god onely, the whiche canne be ſerued no where better thanne in ſolitary and places of religion: for there is no where elles ſo

moch

moche libertie.

How they that lyue a solitary lyfe enioy a double quyetnes. The tenth Chapiter.

BVt what is he that coude worthily deseryue tranquyllitie or quyete? The vnrestfull rorynge of the world doth nat russhe in here amonge vs in religion. What thyng is there abrode in the worlde, that is nat full of bellynge/cryenge, hurlynge and burlynge / and busyneſſe? One wepeth, an other laugheth, he lamenteth, he striueth/he greteth, he telleth newes/one calleth forwarde/ an other cõmandeth to come backe, he is gone, he cometh/one crieth and calleth out a loude, an other ronneth to and fro, yea whiche waye so euer thou loke, where so euer thou become, thou shalte fynde nothynge in quiete / but thou shalte fynde euery

thynge full of noyse and dynne, in ſuche wyſe, that it ſhall ſeme to the, that thou art all to toſſed amonge the raginge wawes of the ſee, whan it is moſte troublous. Whan ſhalt thou haue tyme amonge theſe thynges to ſette thy mynd at reſt and quiete? What is he, that in ſo varyable a ſtate of thinges can ſtand conſtantly & lyue out of trouble? What thing in this whyrle wynde may the deuine mynde of man eyther thynke or do, that is worthy and beſemethe hym to do? Howe is it poſſyble that the ſoule, nowe made deffe with contynual and vnſatiable rorynge & yelhyng, may here her ſpouſe knockinge at the gates of her breaſt, and his voyce ſpekyng to her? For a treuth Helyas perceyued nat, that oure lorde god was with hym, in the cite or towne, but in the mountayne, nat in the courte, but in the caue, nat in the whyrle wynde, that all to brekethe.

kethe the ſtones, nat in diſturbance, no nor in the fyre but in the whiſſing of the thynne and light ayre. If thou haddeſt tyme to ouer rede the holye hiſtoryes, thou ſhuldeſt ſe and perceyue, that the greatteſt myracles of diuine thynges were ſhewed and done in ſolytarye places, and nat where great reſorte and company were gathered. For where was that ſecrete and wonderous miſtery of the burnynge bouſhe that flamed vp, and peryſhed nothyng, ſhewed to Moyſes? was it in the cities of Aegypt? No truelye. (for than he was fledde thence for drede of the tyran Pharao) but hit was done in the hylle of god, after he hadde entredde in to the great, large, and hyghe wodde. Nor the celeſtiall foode Manna, was nat ſente to them that dyd in habite great and noble palaices, but vnto them that dwelled in the floury ſhynge wylderneſſe.

Where was the diuine pompe and triumphe celebrate in gyuyng of the lawe/ whan the celestial trumpettes gaue a terrible sownde, nowe and than thondring and lightnyng with swyfte flame flushynge out of the darke and thycke cloudes? For a trouthe this was done vppon the hylle toppe of Synay, all the common people beynge commaunded to stande a side. And it is lefte in wrytynge, that inold tyme the prophets chylderen/ the whiche in tyme to come shuld be prophettis them selfe, wolde for hatred of the riche edefices and sumptuous buildynges, go dwell vppon the ryuer syde of Jordan. Johñ beynge more than man/ as he that was called the aungell of oure lorde/ I praye the where ledde he his heuenly and moste pure lyfe? Where was he taughte the diuine secretes, that he doubted nat to poynte god with his fynger, that

was

was in likenes of a man? Certaynly he dyd nat lerne it at home with his father / but in the wyldernes. And what meaneth it, that many tymes we se our lorde Jesus hym selfe, as thoughe he were wery of company, departe asyde in to solitarye places? Now often is it red / that he taught in the mountaynes? And what myracles shewed he in desarte places, and vppon the see cooste / bothe in healynge of syckenesses, and in correctynge of the vices bothe of body and soule, in expulsynge and castynge out of wycked spirites, and in feadynge of so great multitudes of people, with so lyttell quantyte of meate? What tyme he wolde fast, he cleane absented hym selfe, and was in deserte places out of the syghte of all folkes. Jn a mountayne that mooste gratious visyon was shewed to his thre apostels. Jn the twy lyghte of that nyght, in the whiche Chryste

ſuffredde hym ſelfe to be taken, to the entente that he wolde praye, he departed and went in to the orchardes. Jt is he the whiche alſo byddeth vs whan we wol pray, to hyde vs in the ſecrete partes of our chambre. And fynally, it was nat cauſeleſſe, but for great ſkele, that he was ſayne without the cytye: ſo that thou mayſt lyghtly perceiue, that he fledde buſy klynge buſynes, that he hated the clamorous aſſyſtence of people, that he loued nat the crackelynge and dynne of the courtes, and that he delyted nat in the getheryng and frequẽce of people, but he ioyed to be alone, and loued very moche tranquillite. Wherto ſhulde J nowe reherce the examples of man, the whiche be of leſſe auctoryte? Men ſay that Pythagoras was taughte many ſecrete thinges in the caue called Jdeus. Plato demed his ſchole of phyloſophy moche more commodious

dious to be kepte atte Achademie thá within the cytie of Athens. The poetes them selfe feyned howe they hadde I wotte nat what clyues and darke woddes / where they wonned or abode / as ofte as the diuine furour toke them: wherby they signifye, that he that desyrethe to endite or make any noble and goodly ditee / he must seperate him selfe from company. Farthermore, to speake of the vulgar people, we se that gold smythes / peynters, and other artificers / in whose workemanshyppe is any thynge of syngular industrie and greate connynge / whan they couet to make any thyng more exactly and with greter diligence / they get them to some place, where the noyse and comming and goynge of folkes shal nat trouble thē in their workes. By al which thinges / it is plaine & euident to pceiue, that moch cōpany anoieth & greueth him right moche:

the whiche entendeth or goth about to do any thynge of greatte weyght and difficulte. And quicte is ryght oportune and very neceſſary for him that wyll enterpriſe or go in hande with hygh & weighty maters. And what is a more higher & a more ſerious buſines thā it that cōcerneth thy ſoule helth, & bleſſed lyuyng? Therfor while thou abideſt in the worlde, thou canſt nat cōmodiouſly atcheue this buſynes. For in what place of the worlde ſhalt thou fynde quicte? But contrary wiſe good Joice, here in religion, all thynges be whiſhte or in ſylence, within / without, and euery where is perfecte peace. The pleaſaunt receſſe or ſolytaryncs of the place, is the cauſe of ſylence: and peace procedeth or cometh of a very good and a cloſe mynde: And ſo moche the tone nedeth the tothers helpe / that if thou take awaye the tone / thou woldeſt thynke that ney-

ther

ther of both remayned: For the outwarde quiete doth cherisshe, norisshe, and defende the inwarde peace: And againe the outward quiete, without the inwarde / wolde be greuous / ydell/ye and very hurtful. And onely hym, that hathe his mynde greuously vexed and troubled / the poet forbyddeth to be alone, sayenge.

What euer thou dost hurtful ar places alone
Be ware of sole placis whan thou dost mone
Whither woldest thou thā flee or start asid?
Among cōpany thou maist moze surely bide.

NOr I may nat here well ouerpasse (all thoughe I entende to be brefe, for hit cōmeth so well to pourpose) that same noble exhortation of the philosopher Crates, the whiche on a tyme, as he beheld and marked a yonge man, that wandred al alone hither and thither/ musyng & imaginyng verie profoundly vpon some thynge: asked him what

he dyd there? The yonge man answered: I talke with my selfe. Take hede quod Crates, that thou talke nat with a lewde or a naughtye felowe. Eche of them answered merily and quickely. Therfore solitarynes in a person of laudable and good lyuyng is commendable: and contrary wyse to wycked and mischeuous lyuers, nothynge is more perillous. For than these mischeuous caytiues thynke on mischiefe/ than they conceyue in theyr myndes most cruel dedes, and thā they treat and reuolue vnhappy counsaylles bothe for them selfe and other. yea & what shulde stere miserable wretches/ to haste to slee them selfe: if oportunitie of solitarines dyd nat prouoke them therto? Who is he that euer dranke poison/that hāged hym selfe, that stickte him selfe, that brake his necke, excepte he were alone? Thou sayest to me: wherfore than doest

doest thou commende to me so moch solitarines, a thynge so perillous? Here haue I nothynge to answere more conueniently than the sayenge of Crates before remembred: whan thou liuest by thy selfe alone, beware that thou lyue nat with a lewde or a wicked felowe, and than thou nedest nat to drede any thynge in solitarines. So depart away from company, that thou mayst be moch farther of from vices: and loke that the places about the be so in silence, that thy corage and mynde gronte nor groudge nat. And al be it that I am longe in this matter, yet my mynde is nat to commende vnto the, the solytarines of Timon; I wolde nat that thou shuldest seperate thy selfe from all mankynde, as he dyd, but I wolde thou shuldest leaue vnruly company. And as touchynge the outwarde quiete I haue spoken sufficiently.

Nowe

Nowe I wyll brefely entreat of the inwarde peace/ the which lyke as it reſteth or conſyſteth in the mynde, ſo it proceedeth or cometh from a good and a pure mynde from vice. For vertue is of ſuche ſtrengthe or effect/ that it quieteth or ſetteth at reſt the mynde or corage / wherin hit remaynceth with an incredible peaſableneſſe, ye and it expelleth or auoydeth al penſyuenes / horrour/drede/ and perturbation. What a thynge vertue is, thou ſhalte better vnderſtande, if thou lyſt to beholde, what greſes, what troubles / and what vexations a wicked mind endureth. For he that is a theſe, a diſceyuer of the people, a hooze monger, a traytour/a rauiſher of women/an aduoutrer/or other wiſe a miſcheuous caitife / his conſcience for the wycked dedes doth oppreſſe hym ſo, that he is all to toſſed and tombled with perpetuall care and drede. The very

ſhappe or fourme of his wicked and miſcheuous dedes, lyke as it were the horrible furies of Helle, ronne vpon hym / they fyerſly aſſayle and enuade hym / bothe ſlepynge and wakynge. At euery thynge he waxeth pale / he is afraid of euery buſſhe / but namely he dredeth ſuſpection / whiſterynge, infamy, iugement / and puniſhement. But admitte / that he ſetteth naught by all theſe thynges / and canne diſceyue the conſcience of men / & that he dredeth not almighty god: yet whan ſhall he brynge it ſo to paſſe / that he maye eſcape the ſmarte prickynges or grudginges of his owne conſcience? That ſhall he neuer do. For what ſo euer thynge he wolde do, or whyther ſo euer he wold flee, the ſame cruel turmentis, ſhutte with in his breaſte / wyll nat leaue hym, they appere ſtyll before hym / they toſſe and turmoyle hym / they make hym afrayde, nor they

wil

wyll nat ſuffer his meate, the lyght of the daye, no nor his lyfe to be ioyous to hym, ye and laſtly they make his very naturall reſt or ſlepe vnquiet to hym. Dereof very often tymes cometh leanes of the body: this cauſeth vggly & fierſe coũtinance, of this cometh the filthines of the eies: and hereof ryſeth feare of euery thynge: wherby they be wonte to diſcouer and bewraye them ſelfe: the which thynge is ryghte well and iuſtly ordeyned of god, that moſte ryghtous iuge, to the intent that no man ſhuld commit an iuell dede, and be vtterly vnpunyſhed: For ſuſpectouſnes is wont forthwith to folow foule and yll dedes, the whiche fyrſt of al doth greatly punyſhe the miſdoer, and there vppon talkynges and infamy dothe folowe, the whiche vndoubted many iudge for ſo great a miſchiefe, that they hadde leauer dye than lyue and endure them. But

ſome

ſome be drowned ſo depe in ſynne, that they ſet naught by ſuche thynges. Admitte it be as the common ſayenge is, that as moche as theyr wyckednes is, ſo moch is theyr fortune, and that no man accuſeth thē, nor no iudge medleth with them: yet I ſaye there ſhall be one in tyme to come, the whiche wyll ſore and rigorouſly punyſſhe them. yea but thoſe thynges be farre of ſay they, as though they were ſure and certeyne, to liue the ſpace of one houre. But admitte it be as they do ſaye, yet for al that euen now whyle they be alyue, they be inwardly turmented and punyſhed with their conſcience, the whiche prycketh ſo ſharply and ſo bytterly, that there is no wycked dede canne cauſe ſo greatte pleaſure, that it ſhulde be boughte with ſuche turmentes. Who coude euer ſufficientlye deme, howe cruell the diſturbance of the breaſte is, whan

whan the selfe mynde with a sharpe sedition stryuethe with it selfe, and some partes therof inclinynge some way/is striken/haled plucked/torren and rent, the memorie accuseth, reason iudgeth / and conscience punysheth. Reason calleth one way / and nature an other waye / and the pleasure of synne an other waye: wherof are engendred perpetuall pryckynges / perpetuall braulynges, and perpetuall warre. Wherfore hit is thought that certain doctours of the churche haue sayde very well / the whiche iudged / that the Remorce of conscience/that accompanieth and gothe with the synners vnto hell, was nat the leest part of the punishementes / that they suffer there. The whiche thynges Juuenall right ornatly (as he doth euery thynge) descryueth as foloweth:

Than

¶ Than what is the cause tel me now why
That thou supposest, howe thou haste
scaped wele
The troublous motions of thy mynde
inwardly
By grouge of thy conscience that the
dothe appele,
And sore the accuseth, & cruelly doth dele.
In thy secrete thoughtes of pryuy pen-
syuenesse
Scourgynge the with scourges of boteles
bytternesse.

¶ Remorse of conscience is of suche ve-
hemens
That it is the pein most peinful of al peines
So sauage, so ragynge, so sowre of ex-
perience
So doggedly gnawynge / so troublynge
mans braynes
That where so Remors of conscience re-
maynes
Ceditius that iudge, nor Radamant iudge
of Hell
Dyd neuer suche punisshement with peynes
halfe so fell

¶ For who so is vexed of conscience with
remorse

Slepyng or wakyng by day and by nyghte
Out of his harte no chaunce can it deuorse
This penitent penaunce ppetuall doth fight
Eatinge or drinkinge it is euer in thy sighte
Thy throte so with thought it dothe bothe
stoppe and freate
That scantly thou canst eate, nor swalowe
downe thy meate.

And so forthe mooste eloquentlye and truly he procedeth. And lyke wyse as the same thinges be proued by reason and auctoryte, euen so therof may be shewed a thousande examples; but bycause we wyll nat tary longe in rehersynge of many, thre shall suffyce vs nowe; of the whiche the fyrste shallbe taken out of fables, the seconde out of the Romayn histories, and the thirde out of holy scripture. What other thynge dothe it sygnyfye, after Orestes had slayne his mother, he was taken with spirites (whiche commonlye are called furies) and was so sore vexed with them, that whither so

euer

euer he fledde / he alway met them shouynge syre brondes against him: than that he / the which committeth any mischeuous dede, is turmented and vexed with the remors of conscience / as thoughe he were taken with a fransy? Certainly many thinges haue ben ryghte connyngly inuented of the poetis / but after mine opinion, none more apt or feter than this. And therfore it repenteth me nat to reherse this fable here. And what thyng is more euide? than the example of Lucius Silla? This man as I rede was cruell out of all measure: so that it is a thing righte myserable to tel how many he banished or commaunded to be slaine: and also he was nat a lyttell garnyshed or decked with other vices. But of this tyran / the very selfe malice that was in hym / toke vengeance / the whiche no man els coude doo? For he was so turmented and vexed with

the conſcyence of his yll and wycked dedes, that by no wyt nor helpe of phiſitions he coude nat recouer agayne his ſlepe, that he had loſte: and ſo at the laſt he dyed of the moſt fylthy diſeaſe called the lowſy yuel. The olde and manifeſt example of Cain dothe yet remayne. We rede that he beynge moued with enuie, ſlewe his brother, but he dyd it nat vnpuniſhed. For he was puniſhed forth with, and that diuerſly/but no way more cruelly/nor more mortally/thã of conſcience. The remorce of conſcience for his wycked dede was to hym more greuous, than any other puniſſhement that god his creatour toke. Oure lorde god rebuked hym yea he rather reclaymed hym/to cauſe hym to take repentance and to confeſſe his offence: but he the wretched cayty ue eſteemed his ſynne greatter than coude be forgyuen. God graunted hym his lyfe, but he

iudged

iudged hym ſelfe vnworthy to lyue. What a vengeable tourmentoure thinke ye thus cruelly vexed his ſtomake? What ſwete or pleſant thing ſuppoſe ye coude chance hym in his lyfe the whiche beinge ſore greued with hym ſelfe, and diſpeyringe of hym ſelfe, as one all heuy and penſiue, demynge his lyfe to hym bitter and ſower, he dred and was aſhamed to come abrode in the ſyght of folkes? For he wente that all other had bene ſuche to hym as he was hym ſelfe. Thus ye ſe good Joyce, what turmentes, what defilynges, what grudgynges, what troubles, and what braydes a wycked and a ſynfull minde endureth. Now take hede and marke, howe reſtfull, how peaſible, and how pleaſant a thyng it is to haue a clere and a vncombred conſcience, and for no gylte to waxe pale? What thynge is it that canne diſturbe or trouble his mynde, that

is well ſetled and ordred? what thynge of ryght ought he to drede? Should he be afrayd of any man? Certainly he nedeth not to drede though man be his enemy, that is hollye bent on god his frend. Shall calamitees and miſeries make hym afrayde? No truely. For he rekeneth them to be his wynnynges. But ſhall he lyue in drede of dethe? the whiche alſo he gladly deſyreth and wiſſheth for? Finally, ſhall he nat feare god hym ſelfe? No truely. For he hopeth and ſurely truſteth, that he is in goddes fauour and kepynge. What can be thought more reſtefull quiete, more vncarefull or more happy, than this thing? Ioice, one may ſele or perceiue it, but plainly it wyll nat be declared. Paraduenture, thou arte ſo bleſſed or happy, that thou haſt alredy lyuynge in the worlde, the ſelfe ſame thynge that I call the vnto. And I veryly truſte

that

that thou haſt. But my mynde is / that ſo moche the rather thou ſhuldeſt flye and leaue the worlde. For here in religion, thou ſhalt fynd and haue it more heapyngly / and faire more ſurer. What thynge maketh the ſo careles, that thou wylt beare ſo dere a treaſure amonge theues? If thou haue ought, it ſhall encreace here in religion / but in the world is continuall feare, leeſt thou forgo it. Here mooſt ſpecially is the ilke inwarde peace: and excepte the outeward quiete be here, it is no where. In the worlde is no inwarde peace, and as for outwarde peace / if there be any / it is very ſcant / and nat very ſure. And this is certayne, that the religious houſes reduce the yll men to goodnes / and they that be good it maketh better: but contrary wiſe, the worlde is wonte to make good men yll / and yll men worſe.

Of the pleasure that is in solitary lyse. The.xi. Chap.

IN discriuynge of tranquillite or quiete, I haue ben more brefe thā the thynge requyred, and yet therin I was more prolixe than I thought to haue ben: Now I wyll as shortly as maye be / declare or entreate of pleasure, the whiche thynge onely remaineth vndeclared. Vndoubted all folkes are so obstinately inclined to pleasure, that for no maner yuels they canne be feared from it, nor no reason can withdrawe them from it? And parauenture it is nat without great ikele that Epicure saythe, mortal creatures in the iugement of pleasures do erre moche: but yet all creatures by one assent, some by one mene and some by an other, seke for pleasures. So that for this cause mooste specially secular or worldely folkes ar wont, both to flie and hate

the institution of our life: the which they repute to be harde/strayte, grevous, peynfull, and cleane without pleasure. But to the ende that this errour shuld nat abasshe or make thé agaste, I shall playnly declare, that it is far otherwyse. yea our lyfe is so moche without pleasure, that I durste entyce to vs all the delicate Sardanapals, as to a paradise of al delites and pleasures. Thou wylte obiecte and say: yea sayth, pleasure is in monastaries/like as the delphin is taken in the woddes, & the wilde bore hunted in the see. I assure the good Joyce, that all the maner of our lyfe is pleasaunt. Thou askeste me howe that shulde be: and I shal shewe the howe. Epicure denyeth those thynges to be pleasures, the whiche be cause of greatter greses. We kepe no drabbes, nor lyue nat in aduoutry: nor we feede nat, nor ingourge nat our selfe, like as the wan

ton prodigall folowes are wonte to do: we be sobre at the fonne goynge downe, and sobre when the sonne ryseth, the whiche thynge they cannat say. For those thynges are neuer in so good plyte, but they be cause of more grefe than delyte. Nor we neyther can nor couet to be enriched: nor to be enobled by any high magistrat or rowme. Nor in these thynges we omytte nat the mayster shyppe of Epicure. For seynge that they cause litell pleasure and moche grefe, me semeth we do wysely, in that that we wyll not bye a smalle commoditie with a gretter inconuenience. Moreouer Epicure teachethe, that other while sorowes must be ventred on, or taken well in worthe, to the ende that gretter and more greuouser dolours may be fledde and eschewed. And lykewyse ofte tymes we muste forbeare smalle pleasures, to thende that we maye opteyne greatter.

What

What speake ye of vs? We religious men suffer and gladly endure watchynge/fastynge, solitarines, sylence/ and suche lyke thynges, to the ende that we wold nat sustein greater sorowes. We be nat dasshed full of swete sauours, we syt nat bolting & drynkynge all the daye, we daunce nor reuell nat, we loyter nat about whither so euer sonde luste callethe vs, nor we sette nat oure sautafy on suche lyke solishe toyes: but wolde to god thou coudest se and beholde with what gret auantage we want those thinges. Hadest thou thought that we had forgone plesure? Nay we haue nat so done, but we haue made a change/ yea in suche a wise/ that for a fewe and small pleasures/ we haue receyued many great pleasures. We thought nowe welyore, that these, picked, delicate felowes gaue an eare, on trust that I wolde shew some new inuention of plesure:

and

and for certayne ſo J wyll. But in the meane tyme J wolde they ſhuld withdrawe their mindes from foule ſtynkyge and vnlefull pleaſures, the whiche they vſe with beaſtes in commune. J wolde they ſhulde forſake theyr beaſtilynes, and vnderſtande, that in man is ſome what more higher and more diuine/where vnto their delectatiō ſhuld be rather applyed than vnto the bodye. For ſeinge that in beſtes there is nothing more noble than the bodye, it is nat vnſkelfull, that theyr felicite reſteth in fillinge of theyr bealies, and in bodily luſte. But the condition or ſtate of man is more worthye, than that he ſhuld eſteme him ſelfe to be borne for none other cauſe than beaſtis be. For man is nat onely made and compacte of the body, but alſo of the ſoule. Jn bodye, ſaue onely in ſhape we deſſerre nothynge from beaſtis: but in the ſoule we reſemble verye moche

moche the diuine & eternall nature. The body is a thyng erthie, beastly, slowe, mortal, syckely / caduke, vncraftye, and vnnoble: Contrarye wyse the soule is a thynge heuenly / diuine, immortall, perpetuall, pure / and noble. Therfore as moch as the bodye is lower and vnder the soule in dygnite / so moche more the pleasure of the soule shulde excelle the wanton and lewde lustes of the bodye. For that pleasure / like the soule it selfe is perpetual neuer lothesome pure / honest, deuine / and helthfull. Contrary wise, the bodily pleasures ar disceiuable, sone vanyshyng, lothsome, more sower than swete / foule, and deedly. But hit is impossible to enioy the pleasure of the bodye and of the soule bothe at ones. The one muste nedes be forgone.

What wolde Epicure say to this / if one asked hym counsaylle? Forsothe that we shulde expelle and put

away

awaye from vs those fylthye and foule lustes of the bodye, that they lette vs nat to opteyne / the swete and moste excelent pleasures of the soule. The whiche thynge (as I haue sayd) is nat away to lose, but greatly to wyn pleasures. But ane thynke thou lokest that I shuld tell, with what plesures of the soule we be fedde here. Fyrste as Epicure saythe, whose anthorite I wyll nat yet forgo / to wante the horryble vexation and grudge of an vnclene conscience / is the greatest pleasure that can be. For he hath nat a lytell to reioyce of, that hath no thynge to be sory for. Farther, is nat the contemplatyon of heuenly and immortall delectations / vnto the whiche we hope ones by goddes grace to come / a thynge of great pleasure. Who is so blonte of vnderstandyng, that whan he beynge werye of this lyfe, do the remembre the felycytye celestyall,

celestiall, wyll nat wepe for verye
ioye? Whose mynde is so agreued
and oppressed with heuynes and so-
rowe, the whiche whan he remem-
breth the lyfe to come, doth he nat
rise vp, and wexe the verye gladder,
yea and wolde fayne be out of this
worlde? What and one myght taste
and sauoure these thinges? For al be
it that they to whom the world is as
yet sauoury, can fynde no sauour or
swetenes in them: yet vnto holy and
well disposed mindes there is no-
thynge more surely approued. And
though that the great ioy and plea-
sure of the lyfe that is reserued in
tyme to come, can nat be perceiued,
before the soule departynge out of
this yll, fylthy, and vnswete prison
of the body, be sente thither agayne,
from whence it came: yet neuer the
lesse, me semeth that good deuoute
mindes haue a smacke and some
perceyuynge therof, and are wette
as

as it were with a deau of heuēly ſho
wers: and of that ſame lyght that
neuer ſhall fayle, they ſe as it were a
glimmering or a glance. The which
thynge howe great a pleaſure it is,
it canne nat be perſuaded vnto hym
that is ignorant and vnexpert ther-
of: but vnto them that be expert
therin, it can nat be eſtemed nor ſpo-
ken howe pleaſante it is. And all
though (as ſaynt Bernarde ſaythe)
theſe delytes are but other whyle,
and are wonte to tary but a ſhorte
ſpace: yet are they ſo great, that if
al the pleaſures of this world were
layd togyther on a heape, in regard
of theſe they wold ſeme to be of no worth,
ye and not to be ſet by. And if there
were no other rewardes, for good
dedes to be hoped for (which thing
is farre otherwyſe) yet for ſothe hit
wold neuer greue me, for this onely
hyre or mede to ſuffer and endure all
maner labours, and wold deme thē

ſo

so worthy, that to thentent to opteyne them / I wolde nat onely dispice and sette naughte by all other lustis and delites of this worlde, but also bydde them batayle. So to than / what mowe we suppose and thynke, that the great plentie or abundance of these ioyes wolde do / if a lytell smacke or a verye thynne sauour of them so moche deliteth, so recreateth, and maketh one so ioyfull? O, howe great a pleasure shall it be / whan that diuine lyghte shal shyne ouer & ouer vs, the which can nat be sene but with most purified eies: so that we also shal all shyne bryght: seinge that a lyttell glymerynge or a glance therof, the whiche quickeli cometh & vanisheth, causeth so great plesure? Farthermore, that swetenes, that the holy goste many tymes secretely entrynge in to the cleane and pure myndes causethe, howe ofte in the moste chaste cham-

hre he enbraceth and clyppethe his spouse, languishynge in his loue, and lamentynge as louers are wont that loue feruently, with mooste gentyll and frendly familiarite, dothe comforte and chere her: this greatte swetenes I saye, wherto shulde I remembre? Let them reherse it that haue knowlege therof. But they knowe hit, and that happilye, the which pleased god shuld haue experience. I am vnworthye as yet to be admitted to come to these delytes: or though I haue a lyttell (klenderly tasted therof, yet I had rather tell it by other than by my selfe. And thoughe it be more certayne to tell it by my selfe, yet hit is more comely that I shewe it by other. I haue harde some saye many tymes with wepynge teares, that these worldly plesures, the which vnto folish bragging felowes sauour so wel, haue semed vnto them so bitter & so sower,

that

that theyr mynde hathe nat onely aborred those thinges/but also their cares to here speake of them / as whan the vse of bread was founde acornes began to be lothed & naught set by:so the false delyte beganne to waxe lothsome to them, after they had taken a taste of the very trewe pleasures. But helas very many worldly people of that rusticall and blounte sorte, haue taken suche a smacke in this swynishe fedynge, that nothynge saue theyr acornes can sauour vnto them. Nor they vnderstande nat what iocūdyte of lyfe may be/or whye they shulde desyre to lyue here in this worlde/if the acornes, that is to say the voluptye and pleasure of the belly and mouth, shulde be taken awaye from them. And therfore so often as they se vs religious men, take suche labours and payne, as they suppose they coulde nat endure/ and yet to be

more lustye / more merye / and in better plite and lykynge than they be that do nothynge els but banket and make good chere, they marnayle out of all measure: For they can nat perceyue howe we shulde haue any pleasure, after we haue forsaken and throwen awaye from vs the delectations and pleasures of the flesshe. And yet these mē se tender yonge mē and also delicate virgins, they se theyr yeres and shappe / and they remembre howe soft and wantonly they were a lyttell before cherished and broughte vp: and on the other syde they leaue nat vnremembred / if in oure religyous life be any thynge sharpe, greuous or peynefull / as solytarynesse, laboure, watche / fastynge / and suche lyke thynges. They se that it is nat only lyfull vnto these yonge children to leaue and forsake this maner of lyfe / but also with what great instance of theyr parentes

parentes & frendes / they be intyced, monished, prayed / and vehemently stered to forsake their relygion: But contrary wise / the more they be perswaded, the more obstinate they be. Their mother that wepeth & waylethe they comforte & bydde to be of good chere, with theyr eien drye. Theyr syster collynge them aboute the necke, they shake of and dispice: And from their most dere playferes / from whom but a lyttell before to be absente a daye, was a very harde thynge / they be nowe righte easyly all theyr lyfe duryng plucked away. Fynally they take theyr leaue and bydd farewell with so mery a countinance / and kisse at theyr last parting with so glad chere, that no man that is by / though he be a stranger, can forbeare wepynge. Jt pleasethe me here (and J praye the be nat agreued therwith) to remembre the heuye & lamentable soupper / whiche

Toria was the laste soupper / that Margerete the good virgyn / the whiche I loued as she had ben myn owne syster, had with her parentes and frendes. I was there presente the same tyme / and so were many moo as well as I / the whiche the mayden had desired to come thither, to thentent / that by oure procuratyon and helpe she myghte opteyne of her father, that that she had frustratly or in vayne desired of hym. vi. yeres daye before / that was to gyue her leaue to be an nunne. For she had than gotten her mothers good wyl. And yet to saye the treuthe, this difficultie of eyther of them / dyd nat chaunce of any vice. For lyke as they were in theyr countray bothe reputed and of linage with the beste / euen so they were in vertue: that there was no man / but that he did both loue and preyse them, whiche thing is rathe or seldome seen in them,

that

that be in welthe and felycite: But they be so tender ouer and loue their chyldren so, as thoughe they greatly loued them. So we beganne to entreate and perswade her father. What shuld I make many wordes? He beynge ouercome partly with shamefastenes, partlye with pyte and compassyon of his daughter, and partlye with our eggyng, granted her requeste. But than thou shuldest sodainly haue seen there a right miserable syghte. The father in collynge and kissing of his daughter beganne so to lamente and wepe, as thoughe she shuld forthe with haue ben layed in her graue. Her mother for very sorow fell downe deed in a swounde. Her onely brother and her syster that was a lyttel elder than she, wepynge and crienge out, enbraced theyr dere syster, and sayd: By these our wepyng teares, and for what so euer brotherly & sisterly pite

and tendre loue maye doo, we pray you, swete syster / that ye forsake vs nat thus youre myserable brother and syster / lest that you being but one distroy vs twayne. The other frēdes wept, some priuely, some openly, some entreated, some perswaded, and some blamed or rebuked: but there was none amonge ther: all, but that the teares ranne from his eyen. And we also that cam to entreate for the mayde / were so moued, what with the wepynge of other that were there, and with the lamentatyon of her father, from whose eies the teares ranne as he had ben a chylde, began iyke wyse to wepe, the whiche thyng though I say it / besemed vs nat. yea and it almoost repented vs, that we had gone so ferre in the matter. What trowe ye dyd the yonge virgin this whyle, the whiche consyderynge her sexe or kinde, her tender age, her

softe

ſofte nature and bryngynge vp, was ſo delycate? Saynte Paule him ſelfe whan he toke leaue to depart from his bretherne, ſhewed that he was moued with theyr wepyng, though it were nat greatly, ſayenge, what do ye wepynge and troublynge mi harte? But the virgin (all though ſhe was of a greatte pietie or mekenes to her father and mother) with her eyes drye, & merye chere, and ſmylynge on her father, ſhe ſayde, that he had no cauſe to be ſo vexed and greued, but he oughte rather to reioyce and be gladde, as he that had nat loſt his daughter, but as he that was ſure to finde her, the whiche ſhulde praye to god for hym. She alſo endeuoured her ſelfe dilygently, with kyſſyng, prayenge, and pratye exortatyō to eaſe and appeſe her mothers heuy harte, and other that were there. But all was in vayne: for they droue forthe and

prolonged the ſupper with ſighinge and ſobbynge, wepynge, and complaynyng, tyll it was very late in the nyghte, and except Margarete, there was not one merye amõge them all. So often as they ſe theſe thynges (for they muſt nedes ſe ſuch thynges other whyle) I mene theſe felowes, the whiche as I haue ſayde, ben all gyuen to bodely pleaſure, they wepe with the other, they maruayle at the ſtoutneſſe and ſtrength of theyr yonge myndes, yea and are aſhamed of their own ſoft delicacy. What ſuppoſe they? Deme they theſe yeres theſe mery continãces, theſe bodies, and theſe ſtomakes, to be ſo ſoone enclyned, yea ſo vtterly to ſet naught by the pleaſures of the worlde, excepte they founde other, that be to them more leauer? Wolde they ſo obſtynately, and with ſo good a corage take theſe labours vppon them, yf they dyd nat knowe very

well

well that they be swete and plea-
sant: So it is good Joyce, so hit is
playnely a thynge / that is swete
and pleasant to them that be experte
therin, semeth sower and harde to
them that be vnexpert therof. But
howe longe shall it be er thou per-
swade these felowes to beleue the?
For as saynte Bernarde saythe,
they se our crosses, but they se nat
our vnctions: Truely I wolde they
had a better mynde / ne were hit
that they haue a pleasure fratyckely
to erre / lyke as Argiuus dyd / of
whome Flaccus speketh. But
seynge that we be nat farre from
the errour of Argyue / I wyll plainly
perswade the. Wolde to god that
I myght lefully haue my wysshe /
that lyke as this my writinges shall
come before thy syght, that so mine
affection might entre into thy mind,
that is to say, that thou shuldest be
so affectioned, whan thou redest it,
as I

as J was, whan J wrote hit.
Than here J wolde make an ende of myne epistil: and wolde thinke that J neded nat to spend many mo wordes to pswade the. But parauẽture bycause that/that J desire, is frustrate or in vaine, and that mine auctoryte is nat sufficient to perswade the/J wyl bryngе forthe saynt Dieronime, the whiche by reason of his good and holy lyfe, was a man of gret grauite, and by reason of his connyng, a very noble man. J pray the tell me mooste holy man, what dost thou in this sharp and comfortles desarte alone, all mooste ded for hunger, so leane with continual watchynge/and wasted awaye with so great labours, haste thou no iocundite or pleasure of thy lyfe? O, saith he while J was in wildernes in that gret desart, the which being burned & parched with the heate of the sõne is but a very course and a harde har

borughe

borought for monkes, howe often tymes thought I my selfe to be amonge the delytes and pleasures in Rome? And I take god to witnesse, that after many a wepyng teare, and after that I had long loked vpward to heuen in cōtēplacyon, me thought many tymes that I was amonge a great sorte of aungelles, and beynge gladde and ioyfull, I sange thus, Post te in odorem vnguentorum tuorum curremus. In the smell of thy swete sauours we wyll ron after the. Paste thou harde good Joyce, what this holy man confessethe here? I coude recyte other to wytnesse the same, but eyther we must gyue credence to hym, or els to no man: And the same pleasure euery good, deuoute, and well disposed soule hath and enioyeth. yet besydes these thynges, excellent lerned men haue an other spe cyall pleasure, that is as ofte as they rede the enditynges of mooste noble wryters,

wryters, or elles whan they them selfe write thinges for other to rede: or elles whan they reuolue in theyr mynde suche thynges as they haue redde. This kynde of pleasure is so variable and so abundante, that it shal neuer seme tedious or make the wery. For if they lyste to drynke of the fyrste fountaynes, than they resort to volumes of the olde and new testament. If that verite, of it selfe honestely arayd, and hyghted with the freshe garmente of eloquence, dothe delyte them, they renne to saynt Hieronyme, saynte Augustine, saynt Ambrose, Cypriane and suche other. If those be nat eloquente inoughe to thy mynde and haste a luste to here some christen Cicero: take and put Lactantius Firmianus in thy bosome. And in case that thou canste be contente with lesse costlye apparayle and sobre fare, than take in thy hande Thomas, Alberte and

suche

ſuche lyke bokes. But and thou canſte nat be longe abſente from the other thyn olde frendes, yet hardely viſete all thoſe to / now and than amonge, ſo that it be gueſt wiſe, and nat as one of houſehold. For among thoſe is ſhe the barbarous woman / but yet ſhe hath a very honeſt continance: the whiche whan thou haſte rauyſhed, and cutte awaye her hearres and nayles / thou ſhalte of a drabbe make her thy lauſull wyfe. Lo, thus thou haſt the ſecrete and many volumes of holy ſcripture / thou haſte the monumentis of the holy prophetes / of the apoſtels / of theyr interpretours / and of the doctours / thou haſte the wrytynges of the phyloſophers and poetes / the whiche ſhulde nat be eſchewed of hym, that knoweth howe to choſe the holſome herbes amonge thoſe that are venomous. Tell me / what tyme thou arte conuerſant amonge

theſe

theſethynges quietly at reſt in thy ſtudye, and at thyne owne libertye, voyde of all care and trouble, dothe it nat ſeme that thou dwelleſt in a paradiſe of al delytes and pleaſures? What place can be tedious where ſo greate variete is? What thynge is here, that is nat full of pleaſure? Nowe gladſomely growe the fayre fyldes and medowes? Nowe pleaſantly luſtreth or ſheweth the freſhe grene graſſe, depeynted with diuers colours of flowers? In that place growethe the beautyfull redde roſe, there ſpryngethe lilies as white as any ſnowe, there be the bankes of the luſty purpul violettes, there groweth the browne time that ſmelleth ſo ſwetelyr. Nor there wantethe no fayre woodes, with brode hanginge bowes and branches, that maketh a ryghte delectable ſhadowe, wherin we may defend vs from the feruente heate of the daye. Farther,

what

what nombre of trees be there, that bere frute nat onely delicious in tast, but (whiche is more) verye holsome to eate? And verye nere there vnto runneth the clere christalline ryuer, that maketh a doulce mourmour or noyse in runnynge, the whiche watreth and moysteth all to gether. This mooste depe ryuer, I saye, the whiche the prophet maruaylynge at, can nat be ouercome. Within these pleasaũt orchardes thou mayste roome and wãder to and fro, yea I may saye thou mayst wantonly sporte and play the as ofte as thou wylte. What lyke pleasure is in your daunsynges, in your tauernes, and ale houses, & in your bathes & hotte houses? To these thynges good Joyce, I call the, as he that is excellently lerned and studyous. yea I desire the as my specyall & dere frende to come vnto these pleasures. Is there any thynge behynde that may

tarye the in the worlde, or els make the afraid to come to vs? Thou hast well vnderstand, how mortall/how bitter/& how sowre the lewde lustes or false enticementes of the worlde be: the whiche (as Seneca saith) embrace and clyppe vs/ to thende that they may strangle or choke vs. Thou hast also hard, how lyttell goodnes is in the worldely ryches/and howe vnstedfaste and disceyuable they be. And as I suppose/ hit is sufficiently shewed/ in to what calamytics and myseries the worldely honours do heedlynge ouerthrowe a man.

Farthermore/ hit hathe benne declared howe vntreatable the necessitye of Dethe is. Finally/ I haue remembred vnto the, howe full of peryll and daunger this lyfe is: and vnto what greuous and peynefull labours hit is subiecte. Goo nowe and questen with thy selfe/ whether thou haddest leuer sticke stil in these

yuels

yuels, or elles throwe them away, & flee hither. And contrary to these thinges, hast thou nat hard what liberty/what quiet, what plesure/and what sure trust is in religiō? And yet for all that thou fleest nat thither? Dost thou yet staye, doste thou yet take deliberation, dost thou yet prolong forth the tyme? Leaue to the Egipcions their pottes of flesshe/that thou maist be fed with manna in the wyldernes. But thou sayste, hit is a harde thynge to be drawen a waye from theyr companye, that a man mooste derely louethe, and to ouercome the affectyons of frendes.
Aye good Joyce thou calleste hit a harde thyng, take hede that thou be nat rather tender & soft. Beware lest yonge chyldren boys and maydes, to whome this matter dothe seme nothynge harde/cocke vp agaynste the and saye these wordes: Sayeste that thou arte vnable to doo that,

that we can awaye with? Why haste thou a bearde? Why arte thou called a mā? What auayle thy yeres of age? And wh rfore serueth thy erudityon and lerninge? Thynke nat/that any thynge is more fooe or ennemy to the/than suche frendes/ the whiche labour to lette or hyndre thy helthe? The whiche frendes, if errour be cause of theyr offence/ or els dote in loue/ dost thou desyre to doote with them? Or if by sadde aduyse, and prudently pondrynge the matter, they let and hyndre the, for what maner of frendes wylte thou deme them, whan they couete nat it that is best for the? But thou sayst, to leade an aungels lyse/ and lyue in the flesshe/ passeth mans power. Finally whan a man can nat lyue after his owne facyō/ but must do euery thynge as an other shall cō-maunde hym, or els to be ledde after the lust & pleasure of an other/ is soo-

uer

ner sayd than done. Truely I wyll nat deny this thynge/for I am not ignorant that mans lyfe on erthe is a warfare. But if there be any grefe or difficultie in a matter / that one goth in a hande with, hit is wonte moste cõmonly to be in the entraũce or begynnynge, the whiche if thou mayste ones stoutely breake or ouercome, thou haste scaped. Vit is longe ago cõmonly sayde: He hath atcheued halfe his warke or busines, that hath begũne aryght. But truely he that dothe well begynne here/dothe well nere make & ende. But the fyrste entrance abasheth the. I know how to delyuer the of this fearefulnesse. If hit greue thy minde to be plucked away frõ the pleasures of the world remẽbre inwardely the eternall delectaciõs & pleasures. If religion seme greuous & painfull to the, haue a respecte to the paines euerlastinge. No punyshment shuld be greuous vnto

the/wherby thou mayst auoide euer lastyng peines: nor for no pleasure here to forgo the celestiall plesure. Fynally/nothyng is harde, that one wyllyngly wyll do: Nor doute nat, but thou shalte bryng well to passe, what socuer thou gost about/so that Chryste be helpynge therynto.

¶ Howe one ought to entre in to religion. Cap. xii.

I Sawe the well ere trusse vp thy bagge and baggage, and so prepare thy selfe redy, as though thou woldest in all hast flee vnto vs. But to the ende that thou shuldest nat be to hasty/I wyll brefely gyue the warnynge before hande/lest it shuld happen vnto the, as it doth e to manye nowe adayes, whiche repente them that they wente in to religion for this cause, that they as it were in to a depe pytte, that one can nat get

out

out of, went nat softly and aduisedly downe/ but lept in at al aduentures. No man is constrayned to Christis profession / but no man may returne or go from it: for without it there is no hope of saluation. But in other institutions and orders of the lyfe/ whiche for a tyme men haue inuented/ by cause of the greatte varietie, that is in mennes bodyes and myndes/ and so great alteration of al humayne thinges/ perauenture it were nat expedient/ so to bynde any man/ that it shulde nat be lefull for hym to go backe / so that the chaunge make more for his soule helthe, that changeth. But seing that they wil haue it other wyse, by whose arbitrement the worlde is gouerned / this busynes shulde be taken on hande more circumspectly, the whiche thynge ones entred and professed / can nat be chaged or reuoked/ at his libertie/ that entreth therin. ¶ The mo-

naſteries in olde tyme were none other thynge, but certayne ſolytarye places of good & vertuous men: the whiche eyther for grefe and weryneſſe of the voluptyes and vyces, with the whiche in thoſe daies the lyfe of mortall creatures was contamynate and defyled: for atte that ſeaſon the Chriſten people and the paynyms lyuedde myngled together: or els beynge agreued with the cruelte of perſecution: they forſoke the cytees and townes, and withdrewe them ſelfe into mountaines, wher they ledde a life angelical. Their clothing was poore & litel worth, their fare was ſklender, ſuch as lightly they miſſed nat to finde in euery place, wherwith they ſpente awaye all theyr tyme eyther in ſynginge of holy ymnies, or in holy redinge, or in heuēly talkinges, or ī deuoute praiers, or in dedes of charite, wherwith they refreſſhed the ſycke

and

and wayfarynge folkes / or elles in innocent worckes, with whiche they holpe and ſuccoured the indygente and nedy. Nor a monke was none other thynge / than a pure Chriſten man. Nor a monaſtery was none other thinge, than a flocke or a companie, whiche had conſpyred or conſented together, to folowe the moſte pure doctryne of Chryſte. There was no ſoueraine commaundement: euery man with good wyl & quickely dyd theyr duetye / and they had thā more nede to be refrayned than prycked forwarde. Theyr extreme punyſhement was a frendely and a brotherly correction. Nowe many monaſteryes be in the middes of the worlde / nor they be none other wyſe out of the worlde / thā the reynes be out of a mans bodye. In whiche the diſcipline of religiō dothe flouryſh in ſuch a wiſe / that thei be none other thinge than ſcholes of īpietie.

To whom the title and habite of religiō ſerueth for none other purpoſe, than that it ſhuld be leful for them, without puniſſhmente, to do what euer they liſt. And to them to whoſe prudence the worlde wold nat cōmyt their kytchyns, the buſynes of the churche is delyuered. And trewely amonge theſe thinges / wherin the diſcipline of religion doth flouryſhe / there is ſome difference. Some inſtitution of the life is more meter for ſome one man than for ſome other. And therfore it behoueth the, firſt to ſerche & make a profe of thy ſelfe / & whā thou knoweſt what thou maiſt away with / than with good aduyſement, chooſe an order of liuing / that is nat vnknowē vnto the / according to ſaint Paules ſaing, proue al thinges, & holde the vnto that that is good. Many one entreth in to religion for none other entent, but to lyue more cōmodiouſly at theyr pleſure, myn-

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dyng more the bealy than the soule. And so those that very nede to lyue honestly in the world, shuld haue caused to vse frugalitie, to haue ben dylygent, and industrious: in monasteries they gyue them selfe to sleuth and luxure. And those that were in the worlde very poore, and of lowe degree, vnder the profession of pouertie they folowe the pompe, the sumptuousnes/and stately aray of princes and greatte lordes. And those that shuld haue ben contented with one wife & haue suffred the incommodities and greses of Matrimony, now frely and with good leaue / they wallow in euery kind of carnal lust. And those that afore tyme the feare of the lawes and gouernours did restraun from doing of yuel & sinful dedes, as exempted from the iurisdiction of the bysshop/& of the rulers of the cõmon welthe, they haue amore libertie to synne. So that by feyned profession

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of pouerty, they flee pouertie: by feyned profession of chastite, they prouide for theyr carnal lust, and by feyned profession of obedience, they find the mean, that they wyl be constrayned to obey no man.

¶ Farther more, there be other, whiche by some chaunce were driuen to this manere of lyfe: One bycause he coude not optein the fauour of some maid, that he vehemently loued: an other bicause he was striken with great feare in the tyme of a tempeste, of some sickenes, or of some other perill, he made suche a vowe. Som be drawē to religiō by one that hath ben afore tyme theyr derely beloued companion. Som with shamefull egginges, are as buguls drawen in to the ditch by the nostrils.

Some also be thrust in to religion by theyr vnkynde and vngentyll parentis: or elles by theyr tutours, to the entent to be eased of theyr coste and charge:

charge: those mooste specially lay awayt to attrap & disceyue the simple youthe / the whiche is verye easie to begyle. But J wolde counsayle the contrarye, that rude and ignorant youth shuld nat be wrapped in an institution / out of whiche they can nat be drawen backe agayne. One ought to be a christen man betymes, and a monke at leasure / howe be it he is a monke at the full, who so euer be a pure christen man. Nor there be nat a fewe / whiche be ledde to religion by superstition or elles by folishenes, whiche beinge ignorant, in what thing the very religion resteth, seme (as they think them selfe) gaye monkes / if they weare a girdil or a hood. And therfore thou shuldest maruaile neuer a deale, thoughe thou se them more lewde and wycked, after they haue professed religion, than they were before.

¶ Thus myn owne good Joyce / whan

whan thou haſt gotte the knowlege and vnderſtandyng/what thyng the true religiō is/after thou haſt aſſaied thy wyt/thy body,ꝛ thy minde,and whan thou haſt ſpied out a kynde of liuinge, mete for thy purpoſe,ꝛ whā thou haſt founde out a felowſhippe/ whiche al to gether with one aſſent, haue fully determined they⁊ mindes to lyue after Chriſte: than gette the thither. But loke that thou leaue al couetouſnes of this world at home: for other wiſe it were a thing in vain to forſake the world/if thou ſhuldeſt cary the worlde with the in to the ſame monaſtarie. Cary no maner of delectations of Aegypte with the, if thou wylte ſpede the to the lande/ that floweth with mylke ꝛ hony. Many thynke them ſelfe the verye folowers of ſaynt Antony, and of ſaynt Paule/if they haunte no drabbes, nor vſe no daunſynge, nor wyll nat be dronken/ thoughe they with

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in forthe be all to sprincled with hatred, enuie, detraction, poisonfulle wordes and are prowde & stately of conditions/froward, and vntreatable, & are louers of them selfe: and for their winning & aduãtage thei opẽly flatter gret princes: & wittyngly of a forecast suffre the glory of Christ to be obscured & blotted out, to thende that they maye procure theyr owne glorye. Jnceste, that is to say carnal copulation, vtterly prohibited / or foule polucion, is a sklaunderous crime/and yet J trowe they be nat clere of those vices: but this flattery passeth an hondred incestes/ and the mischiefe therof spredeth most largely ouer al mankynde.

Now perauenture thou wilt say to me/that al monasteries displese the: nor there can be founde no where a flocke/that hath with pure myndes consented to lyue after Christe. But yet loke that thou so leaue & forsake

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the world, that thou mayste accompany thy selfe with who so euer be mooste innocente: and repute thy selfe to be in a monastery, where so euer thou be conuersante amonge them that loue trouthe, pure chastite, sobrenes, and temperance / and do bothe in worde and dede expresse the same. Nor thou shuldeste nat think / that there wanteth any thing for the to vowe, if thou fullfyll the vowe that thou madest to Christe at thy christenynge. Nor thou shuldest nat desyre the habyte of the white frere or of the blacke, if thou obserue and kepe clene vndefiled, the fayre whyte garment, that was delyuered to the in baptisme. Nor be nat dysplesed with thy selfe / thoughe thou be nat of the flock of blacke friers or white / so that thou be of the flocke of true Christen people. Thus farewel myn owne good Joyce.

FINIS. 2 JY 58

TABLE.

¶ The table conteynynge the chaptres of this boke of De contemptu muudi.

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